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# ARABIC HISTORICAL DIALECTOLOGY

*Linguistic and Sociolinguistic  
Approaches*

*Edited by*  
**CLIVE HOLES**

OXFORD STUDIES IN DIACHRONIC & HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

## Arabic Historical Dialectology

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# Arabic Historical Dialectology

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*Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Approaches*

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CLIVE HOLES

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## *Series preface*

Modern diachronic linguistics has important contacts with other subdisciplines, notably first-language acquisition, learnability theory, computational linguistics, sociolinguistics, and the traditional philological study of texts. It is now recognized in the wider field that diachronic linguistics can make a novel contribution to linguistic theory, to historical linguistics, and arguably to cognitive science more widely.

This series provides a forum for work in both diachronic and historical linguistics, including work on change in grammar, sound, and meaning within and across languages; synchronic studies of languages in the past; and descriptive histories of one or more languages. It is intended to reflect and encourage the links between these subjects and fields such as those mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The goal of the series is to publish high-quality monographs and collections of papers in diachronic linguistics generally, i.e. studies focussing on change in linguistic structure, and/or change in grammars, which are also intended to make a contribution to linguistic theory, by developing and adopting a current theoretical model, by raising wider questions concerning the nature of language change, or by developing theoretical connections with other areas of linguistics and cognitive science as listed at the beginning of this preface. There is no bias towards a particular language or language family, or towards a particular theoretical framework; work in all theoretical frameworks, and work based on the descriptive tradition of language typology, as well as quantitatively based work using theoretical ideas, also feature in the series.

Adam Ledgeway and Ian Roberts

*University of Cambridge*

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## *List of abbreviations*

a	article
adj	adjective
ap	active participle
aux	auxiliary (verb)
b	broken (plural)
C	consonant
com	common
constr	construct (state)
def	definite
dem	demonstrative
du	dual
f	feminine
fut	future
indef	indefinite
indir	indirect
interrog	interrogative
m	masculine
n	noun
neg	negative
obj	object
p-stem	prefix-stem (of the verb)
part	particle
perf	perfective (particle)
poss	possessive
pref	prefix
prep	preposition / prepositional
pron	pronoun
pl	plural
ps	passive
q	question (clitic)
reflex	reflexive
rel	relative
s	sound (plural)
s-stem	suffix-stem (of the verb)

sng	singular
subj	subject
trans	transitive
V	vowel
v	verb
Ar.	Arabic
Aram.	Aramaic
Akk.	Akkadian
Ber.	Berber
Eng.	English
Fr.	French
Gk.	Greek
H.	Hindi
It.	Italian
L.	Latin
Pers.	Persian
Sp.	Spanish
Syr.	Syriac
Sum.	Sumerian
T.	Turkish

# Transliteration and transcription conventions

## 1. ARABIC TEXT

All Arabic speech data in this book have been transcribed using the italic symbols in the left-most column of the chart in the next section, which is the system used in the *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik*. The corresponding IPA symbols are in the next column, and a phonetic description of each sound, using traditional nomenclature, is in the third column. The chart summarizes all the Arabic consonant sounds<sup>1</sup> which occur in this book—but of course, not all of them occur in every Arabic dialect. Though some of them are (a) shared by virtually all dialects, and (b) correspond to the same original sounds in Old Arabic<sup>2</sup> (OA), others have different OA correspondences. For example, the grapheme ج (*ġīm*), whatever its OA realization(s) may have been, corresponds regularly to several different modern dialectal sounds, depending on the dialect: ġ, ž, g, or y—so that written Arabic جار ‘neighbour’ can be pronounced in normal speech as *ġār* (e.g. in Baghdad), *žār* (Damascus), *gār* (Cairo), or *yār* (Gulf). The grapheme ق (*qāf*) may correspond to any of the dialectal sounds q, g, ʔ, k, ġ, ġ, or ġ, and here the determining factor is (in some cases) not only geography but the social profile of the speaker. So while written Arabic قريب (normally pronounced *qarīb* in formal spoken Arabic) ‘near’ is typically pronounced ʔarīb in Beirut and Damascus speech, *qarīb* in Muscat, and *girīb* in Baghdad, things are more complicated in the small Gulf State of Bahrain: there it can be pronounced *ġirīb*, *karīb*, *garīb*, or *ġarīb*, depending on who is speaking. In Bahrain, the ġ pronunciation is the ‘heritage’ pronunciation of the older members of the so-called ‘Arab (tribally descended Sunni) communities, and occurs, as in this example, in front-vowel environments; the k pronunciation is typical of many Baḥārna villages (all Shī’a) in all environments; the g pronunciation occurs in urban Baḥārna speech and ‘educated’ Baḥārna speech more generally; and *ġarīb* is a purely ‘Arab pronunciation in certain categories of word.’<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A number of non-Arabic sounds/symbols occur in certain chapters in which data from related languages (e.g. Modern South Arabian Languages in chapter 11) are exemplified and compared. These are explained *in situ*.

<sup>2</sup> In this book, ‘OA’ is a cover term used for varieties of immediately pre- and early Islamic spoken Arabic for which we have almost no direct evidence and few reliable reports. It is, however, clear that the phonology of the OA tribal dialects was not identical with the Classical Arabic system codified by the Arab grammarians some two to three hundred years later (from the late eighth century AD onwards) as we know from the grammarians’ own remarks (see §1.3.1). In this book, reconstructed OA forms (see especially chapter 8) are in roman, preceded by an asterisk.

<sup>3</sup> This pronunciation makes the word sound like its exact opposite in meaning, *ġarīb* ‘stranger’. But there is no confusion, as *ġarīb* ‘stranger’ in the ‘Arab dialect of Bahrain is pronounced by many speakers as [qarīb]: initial and medial [ɣ] is realized as [q] or [G], so *qanī* ‘rich’, *qēr* ‘other than’, *qasal* ‘he washed’—there has been a merger of ġ and q in non-final position in the ‘Arab dialect (Holes 2016: 53–4). The late Sheikh Isa bin Salmān, Ruler of Bahrain (1961–99), would often, even in formal public speeches, confuse q and ġ in this way, e.g. he pronounced *taqaddum* ‘progress’ as *taġaddum*.

Looking at things the other way round, a single dialectal phoneme can be ‘multivalent’ across different dialects: the sound *g*, for example, corresponds to historical ځ in Cairo, most of Oman, and a large part of Yemen, but in other dialects it corresponds to historical ڭ, e.g. those of southern Egypt, those of most of Arabia, and all ‘bedouin’ Maghrebi dialects; and it also occurs widely in borrowings which are not originally Arabic at all. Details of the phonological systems of the individual dialects dealt with in this book are explained in each chapter where they are relevant to the subject at hand.

## CONSONANTS

Symbol	IPA value	Phonetic description
ʔ	[ʔ]	glottal plosive
<i>b</i>	[b]	voiced bilabial plosive
<i>p</i>	[p]	voiceless bilabial plosive <sup>4</sup>
<i>t</i>	[t]	voiceless dental-alveolar plosive
<i>t̤</i>	[t̤]	voiceless interdental fricative
<i>ǧ</i>	[d͡ʒ]	voiced palato-alveolar affricate <sup>5</sup>
<i>ž</i>	[ʒ]	voiced palato-alveolar fricative
<i>ħ</i>	[ħ]	voiceless pharyngeal fricative
<i>x</i>	[x]	voiceless velar fricative
<i>d</i>	[d]	voiced dental-alveolar plosive
<i>d̤</i>	[d̤]	voiced interdental fricative
<i>r</i>	[r]	voiced dental-alveolar tap/rolled
<i>z</i>	[z]	voiced dental-alveolar fricative
<i>s</i>	[s]	voiceless dental-alveolar fricative
<i>š</i>	[ʃ]	voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
<i>ṣ</i>	[s̥]	voiceless velarized <sup>6</sup> dental-alveolar fricative
<i>ḍ</i>	[d̥]	voiced velarized dental-alveolar plosive
<i>ṭ</i>	[t̥]	voiceless velarized dental-alveolar plosive
<i>ḍ̤</i>	[d̤̥]	voiced velarized interdental fricative
<i>ẓ</i>	[z̥]	voiced velarized dental-alveolar fricative <sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *p* occurs only in foreign borrowings in some Arabic dialects and is sometimes replaced by *b*, e.g. *pāča*/*bāča* ‘offal stew’ (Iraq) < Pers. *pāčā* ‘feet of sheep, calves or other animals, especially when boiled’; *banka* ‘fan’ (Gulf) < H. *pankhā*; *bančar* ‘puncture’ (Iraq, Gulf) < Eng. *puncture*; *paxxāxa* or *pakka* ‘chameleon’ (Morocco) (unknown etymology).

<sup>5</sup> As already noted, in some eastern Arabian dialects *ǧ* can be a reflex of *g* < OA *q*, e.g. *ǧīlil* ‘little, few’, and forms a pair of alveolar affricates with *č* < OA *k*.

<sup>6</sup> Also termed ‘emphatic’, ‘emphatized’, or ‘pharyngealized’ and indicated by a subscript dot. In relevant contexts, secondary velarization of other consonants is also so indicated, e.g. North African *bḅa* ‘daddy’, *mṃi* ‘mummy’.

<sup>7</sup> *ẓ* occurs in Egypt and the Levant as a reflex of *ḍ̤*.

Symbol	IPA value	Phonetic description
ʕ	[ʕ]	voiced pharyngeal fricative
ġ	[ɣ]	voiced velar fricative
f	[f]	voiceless labiodental fricative
q	[q]	voiceless uvular plosive
g	[g]	voiced velar plosive
ġ	[dz]	voiced dental affricate <sup>8</sup>
k	[k]	voiceless velar plosive
č	[tʃ]	voiceless palato-alveolar affricate <sup>9</sup>
ć	[t̪s]	voiceless dental affricate <sup>10</sup>
l	[l]	voiced dental-alveolar lateral
m	[m]	voiced bilabial nasal
n	[n]	voiced dental-alveolar nasal
h	[h]	voiceless glottal fricative
w	[w]	voiced bilabial glide
v	[v]	voiced labiodental fricative <sup>11</sup>
y	[j]	voiced palatal glide

## VOWELS AND SYLLABLE STRUCTURE

The vowel systems of some Arabic dialects bear a resemblance to that of Classical Arabic (CLA), but others are quite different. Some, like CLA, have a system of three short vowel phonemes (*a*, *i*, *u*) and three long (*ā*, *ī*, *ū*). But others have three short and five long, with the addition of *ē* and *ō*, derived from historical \*ay and \*aw respectively. A major difference with CLA is that in many dialects, which unlike CLA are natively spoken living forms of speech, non-final unstressed short vowels are liable to neutralization (to ə) and/or to deletion, and long vowels in certain positions to shortening, but the conditions in which these processes occur differ from one

<sup>8</sup> ġ occurs in the dialects of Najd, central Saudi Arabia, as a reflex of *g* < OA *q* in front vowel environments, e.g. *ġima* 'value'.

<sup>9</sup> In many dialects of northern and eastern Arabia including the Gulf, southern Iraq, and parts of the Fertile Crescent, č is a common reflex of OA *k*, e.g. *čibīr* 'big'. In the 'bedouin'-descended dialects it normally occurs in front-vowel environments only, but in some 'sedentary' dialects of eastern Arabia and central Palestine, it can occur in any vocalic environment.

<sup>10</sup> ć is the voiceless member of the ġ-ć pair of dental affricates in Najd and is a reflex of OA *k* in front-vowel environments, e.g. *čibīr* 'big'.

<sup>11</sup> v is a relatively rare sound in Arabic dialects. It occurs regularly in some Turkish Arabic dialects as a reflex of *f* where *f* occurs in contiguity with a voiced consonant, e.g. *vzaʕt* < *fzaʕt* 'I was afraid'; but in Ḥassāniyya (the Arabic dialect of Mauritania) it is the *normal* reflex of OA *f* in most positions, e.g. *vriġ* pl *vərgān* 'encampment', the *f* allophone occurring in only a limited range of environments.



dialect to another. In particular, some Maghrebi dialects allow vowel deletion and consequential consonant clusters to a much greater extent than is true of Mashreqi ones, and this is a very salient feature of how they sound. In the Mashreq, many ‘bedouin’ dialects have a general rule which disallows sequences of more than two short syllables, e.g. CV-CV-CV(C), which becomes CCV-CV(C) or CVC-CV(C), and restricts the occurrence of *a* in open syllable to certain consonantal environments. There are many other such local phonological rules,<sup>12</sup> and, where relevant, these are commented on in the chapters which follow. In general, however, the examples are transcribed in a broad system, except in a few cases.<sup>13</sup>

## GLOSS LINES

Where they are used, gloss lines employ the abbreviations listed earlier, and include only as much detail as is required for the morphological analysis in a particular case, which may differ from one chapter to another, e.g.

(from chapter 8)

*al-insān lo ma yi-ba yi-mūt b-yi-mūt guwwa*  
 the-man if not 3msng-want 3msng-die b-3msng-die force  
 ‘If man doesn’t want to die, he’ll die against his will’

(from chapter 9)

*hak-at-li hakkōy-ət lə staxbar-tū-wa ʿala-ya*  
 tell.s-stem-3fsng-to-1sng story-constr rel ask.s-stem-1sng-3fsng on-3fsng  
 ‘She told me the story about which I had asked her.’

## 2. PROPER NAMES IN THE TEXT AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Well-known place and other proper names are spelled in accordance with normal practice, so Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus. Less well-known ones are in a modified version of the orientalist convention, in which long vowels are marked with a macron, velarized consonants with a subscript dot, e.g. al-Fuṣṭāṭ, but there are some differences from the (italicized) transliteration of actual Arabic text: *th* is used rather than *ṭ*, *dh* rather than *ḍ*, *kh* rather than *x*, *j* rather than *ǧ*, *sh* rather than *š*, *gh* rather than *ġ*.<sup>14</sup> The same applies to the names of Arab historical figures and authors, e.g. al-Jāḥiḍ, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Qalqashandī, and to the titles of books transliterated from the Arabic, e.g. Al-Taghribirdī’s *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa l-Qāhira*.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the so-called *bukara*- and *gahawa*-syndromes (see Glossary).

<sup>13</sup> In chapter 10, for example, *ā* indicates a raised variety of short *a*, and *ē* a front variety of intermediate height.

<sup>14</sup> Where, in a few cases, alternative symbols are used in the quotation of the work of others, e.g. *ḡ* (for *j*), these are left as is, as the phonetic value intended is obvious.

## The contributors

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# Introduction

CLIVE HOLES

This book is a first step down the road of describing the history of Arabic as a *spoken* language. It would obviously be impossible in a book of this modest length to attempt to cover everything that has a claim to importance, whether from the point of view of dialect geography, history, or language processes. The ten chapters which follow all treat substantial topics and are by leading authorities in their fields. Each has a distinct focus, but there are many shared elements and themes, and cross-referencing enables the interested reader to follow them across the whole work. The bibliography is comprehensive and a glossary of Arabic linguistic, cultural, and historical terms provides the non-specialist with a ‘one-stop shop’ for quick reference.

The authors were asked to adopt a historical perspective in their descriptions and analyses, though the degree to which this is feasible depends in part on the availability of reliable historical sources, which is highly variable. The time frame covered is from the advent of Islam in the early seventh century AD<sup>1</sup> up to the present day. Seven of the chapters are geographical in focus (Taine-Cheikh on Mauritania; Aguadé on the Maghreb; Behnstedt and Woidich on Egypt; Lentin on the Levant; Procházka on the Northern Fertile Crescent; Holes on the Gulf; Watson on South Arabia); one is ‘communal’ (Khan on Judaeo-Arabic); and two each deal with an individual linguistic feature (Owens on the origin and evolution of the *b*- verbal prefix in the Gulf, the Levant, Egypt, Yemen, and Nigeria; Ferrando on the ‘adnominal linker’ *-an* in medieval Andalusian Arabic, similar forms of which, with identical functions, occur in other old and geographically peripheral dialects of Arabic, as far away as Central Asia). Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain separate chapters on the linguistic history of Malta and the Sudan, which exemplify important leit-motifs not covered elsewhere in the book: Malta, because it is a (literal) example of an Arabic *Sprachinsel* which, around the end of the eleventh century, was summarily cut off from ‘heartland’ Arab linguistic influence and has thus preserved evidence of what the spoken Arabic of North Africa was like a millennium ago; Sudan, because in

<sup>1</sup> Al-Jallad (2018) gives a summarizing overview of what is known about Arabic in the centuries before the advent of Islam.

medieval times it acted as a conduit for migrations from Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula to the Sāhīl region of West Africa. Certain Sudanese dialects (Reichmuth 1983) have absorbed linguistic influences from both, and are, it would appear, the link in the diffusion of certain unusual dialect features from Arabia to the Sāhīl and northern Nigeria. Sudan is important in the history of Arabic for another reason: it is one of the few places in the Arabic-speaking world where a process of full-blown pidginization and creolization occurred, the results of which have survived up to the present day. The process started in nineteenth-century military camps, and produced so-called Juba Arabic (for a description, see Manfredi 2017).

The main purpose of this introductory chapter is to outline, principally for the benefit of the non-specialist reader, the cultural hinterland of Arabic language history. Many issues discussed in detail in the individual chapters are mentioned here in passing and briefly exemplified, but this introduction is not a summary of their arguments, far from it; indeed, some authors disagree with each other on how certain linguistic developments in Arabic are best explained. The objective here is rather to set the chapters as a whole in their cultural, historical, and scholarly context, and, as the subtitle of the book suggests, adumbrate the linguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to Arabic dialectology which underpin them. Also included here, where relevant, are historical data from Arab lands not specifically covered in any individual chapter (e.g. Iraq), and certain general topics not dealt with in detail either (e.g. dialect typology, indexicalization, pidginization).

## 1.1 THE EARLY HISTORY OF ARABIC: MYTH AND REALITY

The history of Arabic is long, complicated, and in some periods and locations, obscure. But its history in the imagination of the ordinary man in the Arab street is anything but: it bursts on to the scene, seemingly from nowhere, with the seventh-century Revelation of God's word to Muḥammad, the Arabian Prophet, vouchsafed by the Angel Gabriel, and recited by him in Arabic, at first to a sceptical audience, and later to a growing band of believers. Later collected together and written down, these oral recitations, 'sent down' over a twenty-two-year period, became the scriptures of the new religion of Islam. Though the Arabian poets of the pre-Islamic 'Time of Ignorance' (*al-ġāhiliyya*) were and still are celebrated for the magnificence of their mono-rhyming odes (*qaṣā'id*), it was the revelation of the Qur'ān, and *in Arabic*, which, in the popular imagination, moved the language and the people who spoke it to centre stage in world history.

The first attestation of the word *qur'ān* is in the Qur'ān itself, where it means 'reading' or 'recitation'. It may have been calqued on the cognate Syriac word *ḵeryānā* 'scripture reading, lesson', and modelled on the similar Arabic verbal noun pattern CuCCān. The word '*arabiyy*' ('Arab', 'Arabic') occurs eleven times in the Qur'ān, and in six of these instances it specifies that the Prophet's recitation is an 'Arabic Qur'ān' (*qur'ān-un 'arabiyy-un*) and, furthermore, 'an Arabic Qur'ān that contains no

crookedness'<sup>2</sup> (*qurʿān-an ʿarabiyy-an ġayra dī ʿiwaḡ-in*). In five others it collocates with other nouns: its orality is suggested by the phrase 'a clear Arabic tongue' (*lisān-un ʿarabiyy-un mubīn-un*); and its purpose was to provide 'a decisive Arab/Arabic judgement' (*ḥukm-an ʿarabiyy-an*).

That the Qurʿān was revealed through the medium of Arabic has thus, from the very beginning, been an intrinsic part of its message. But whether the word *ʿarabiyy* 'Arab, Arabic' meant at the time of the Revelation what it means today is, among the scholarly community, a moot point. Retsö, in his monumental study of the Arabs in antiquity,<sup>3</sup> contends that *ʿarabiyy* in the Qurʿān probably 'refers to a language connected with the *ʿarab* which was known as a vehicle for messages from the non-human world' and was not simply 'the normal everyday speech in Mecca and its surroundings' (2003: 592). In his opinion, another rather problematic word, *ʿaʿġamī*, which in the Islamic Middle Ages came to be used to designate 'speaker of a language other than Arabic' (e.g. of Greek, Persian, etc) is in the Qurʿān used to refer to forms of Arabian speech which deviated from *ʿarabiyy*, and may have referred to the Arabian speech in everyday use at the time (Retsö 2013: 434–5). In the same vein, Webb (2014: 156ff.), on the strength of another trawl through the early sources, and a study of the words derived from the root *ʿ-r-b* in the Qurʿān, claims that *ʿarabiyy* may have originally denoted not a community of speakers or their language but rather God's message, and one which the Qurʿān repeatedly states that the *aʿrāb* ('bedouin') largely failed to embrace, making it therefore illogical, in his view, that the relational adjective *ʿarabiyy* should be understood as relating to their language: '... the Qurʿān's "*ʿarabiyy*" is an adjective of revelation, not a people. "*ʿArabiyy*" is an adjective for the Qurʿān's sacred idiom.... The Qurʿān's conception of Arabic is that of a language possessing miraculous clarity that conveys the Sacred Message, and prompts its listeners to comprehend and respond by embracing Islam'. Self-evidently, the text of the Qurʿān is in a variety of the language we now call 'Arabic', but, even if one remains sceptical of the Retsö/Webb hypothesis that it had once a special sacred or esoteric sense, the word *ʿarabiyy* at the time of the Revelation may indeed have had a different meaning from what it has now or had in the early Islamic centuries.

It is indeed probable that the meaning of *ʿarab* and *ʿarabiyy* as 'Arab/Arabic' in the general ethnic and linguistic senses we know today developed late—well after the death of the Prophet—and were not current in pre-Islamic Arabia. Macdonald (2009) has documented the wide range of peoples and communities to which these terms were applied before late antiquity (i.e. before about AD 106), which varied depending on who was using them, for what purpose, and in what context. There seems at this point to have been no unified concept of what 'Arabs' were: the term was applied by outsiders of many different backgrounds to peoples some of whom didn't speak Arabic at all, and many of whom, to judge from the descriptions, were not nomadic pastoralists either. As a *self-descriptor*, the ethnonym 'Arab' at this

<sup>2</sup> The translations are those of Pickthall.

<sup>3</sup> For a critical but generally very positive review of this landmark work see Donner 2007.



period was rare. If one can generalize, it seems to have often been applied as an unflattering term to ‘the other’—an exotic stranger not part of one’s own community. Hoyland (2015: 26) notes that in the famous funerary inscription at Namāra, 120 km south-east of Damascus, dating to AD 328—much later than Macdonald’s material but still three centuries before the Revelation—a certain Marʿu l-Qays bar ʿAmrū is praised as being ‘king of all the Arabs’ (*mlk ʿl-ʿrb kl-h*). This text is written in Nabatean (i.e. Aramaic) script but the language seems to be Arabic (except for *bar*, Aramaic ‘son’, for Arabic *ibn*, and the word ʿ*kdy* (‘thereafter’ (?)), which has not been attested in any variety of Islamic-period Arabic). But who were these fourth-century ‘Arabs’ that Marʿu l-Qays was king of, and where did they live?

Schiettecatte and Arbach (2016) have outlined the tribal geography of Arabia in c. the mid-third century, based on a recently discovered Sabaic inscription. This locates the ‘Arab’ tribes of Asad<sup>ān</sup>, Nizār, Maḍḥiġ, Maʿadd, and Ṭayy in the north and west of Arabia. Three of these, Asad, Maḍḥiġ, and Maʿadd are also mentioned by name in the Namāra tomb inscription as having been ‘subdued’ or ‘mastered’ by Marʿu l-Qays. This suggests a degree of stability in the demography of Arabia through at least the third and fourth centuries. In the Qurʾān, however, revealed three centuries later in the early to mid-seventh century AD, the noun ʿ*arab* (in contrast with its adjective ʿ*arabiyy*) is absent. This is surprising, but probably not significant, as by this time the generic concept of ‘Arabs’ based on a common language and shared elements of culture (such as the tribal poetry which was then circulating) must have existed at least in embryonic form. More likely than any esoteric meaning, it seems to this writer that the Qurʾān’s repeated insistence on the ‘Arab/Arabic’ nature of its message was intended to promote a distinctive linguistic facet of this emerging shared culture, to which it was now adding a new religious dimension. As noted earlier, in several of the verses where it occurs in the Qurʾān, the word ʿ*arabiyy* is further specified as something ‘clear’, something that everybody who listened to it would easily understand.<sup>4</sup> It is significant in this context that the Qurʾān delivers a damning judgement on poets, famous as clever wordsmiths and ‘seers of the unseen’: ‘As for poets, the erring follow them. Hast thou not seen how they stray in every valley, and how they say that which they do not?’ (Q 26: 223–5). The Prophet’s own expressed opinions were similar: ‘It is better for a man to fill the inside of his body with pus than to fill it with poetry’ (the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī Volume 8, Book 73,

<sup>4</sup> Recently, the standard translation of *mubīn* as ‘clear’, and the assumption behind this translation that this ‘clarity’ inheres in the fact that the Revelation was in Arabic has been challenged (Dichy 2009):

‘Si l’on compare cette fois le participe *mubīn* et l’adjectif *bayyin*, qui exprime l’état caractéristique de « clarté », une différence cruciale se fait jour. Du fait qu’il est un participe actif, *mubīn* peut prendre deux valeurs:

- la valeur d’état résultatif, qui est produite par un événement accompli (et donc passé): le Livre est dit alors « ayant fait la clarté », à partir de l’événement de sa propre énonciation;
- la valeur progressive, qui dénote un événement en cours: le Livre est dit, mot-à-mot, « faisant la clarté » en s’énonçant, ou « en train de faire la clarté ».

It is not, on this reading, the linguistic fact of ‘being in Arabic’ which renders the message ‘clear’; the act of ‘making clear’ the message is a process, and ‘clarity’ a result, which are both predicated of the Divine, and achieved through the agency of His Prophet’s revelations, and not through the choice of language forms in which this message is vouchsafed.

No 175). This poetry was composed in the same variety of Arabic as the Qurʾān, but the Prophet wished at all costs to distinguish his message from it; for him, Arabic poetry was a dangerous waste of time, lies even, and in that respect quite unlike the Qurʾān, whose message was described by itself as clear and straightforward.<sup>5</sup>

The Revelation of the Qurʾān was one of two events of the greatest linguistic significance in the history of Arabic; the other was the Arab conquests which began shortly after the death of the Prophet in 632 and were largely complete by about 715. The Arab armies of conquest and their camp followers exported Arabic to a vast region stretching from Spain in the west to Central Asia in the east. But what kind of Arabic was it that they spoke? We have almost no direct contemporaneous evidence. Modern popular culture, as evinced in the 1976 film *al-Risāla* ('the Message' in the English language version) and countless TV historical dramas, depicts the Arabs of that time as speaking perfect Classical Arabic (CLA) at all times with full case- and mood-endings. Many native speakers still believe implicitly that this cinematic scenario reflects the reality, and it has even been espoused by some academic historians of the language: cf. Versteegh 1984: 17 'before the coming of Islam there was a single Arabic language, which was used both as a colloquial and literary language'. On this view, CLA was there *ab initio* as a spoken as well as a written language and was gradually corrupted, owing to imperfect learning by the non-Arab subjects of the early Islamic Empire,<sup>6</sup> who vastly outnumbered the native Arabic speakers who formed the first wave of migrants. The end point of this process, according to the popular belief, was the Arabic dialects spoken today. This account—of a distant golden age of linguistic perfection corrupted by foreigners—is one of several popular myths about the language:<sup>7</sup> for many Arabs, 'the Arabic language' (*al-luġa l-ʿarabiyya*) refers only to the modern version of this 'pure and eloquent' (*faṣīḥ*) form of the language, and not to the 'corrupt' forms they themselves use in everyday speech (which they refer to more informally as *ʿarabiyy*).

If that is the myth, what was the reality, insofar as we can glean it from the historical record? We know that initially, Greek, Coptic, and Persian were retained as *written* languages for administrative purposes in the territories of the Byzantine and

<sup>5</sup> By the end of the ninth century, another linguistic facet of the Qurʾān, the 'inimitability' (*iʿǧāz*) of its style, had become established doctrine, and in consequence it came to represent for (Muslim) Arabs the apogee of *faṣāḥa*, a word which combines notions of purity and eloquence. The traditions of melodic Qurʾānic cantillation and the artistic calligraphy of the text which developed subsequently have become ubiquitous aspects of Arabo-Muslim religious culture, and learning to recite the Qurʾān from memory, beginning at the age of six or seven at religious schools (the *kuttāb*) was the foundation of pre-modern education all over the Arab world. The Qurʾān is the only Arabic text invariably written with full vocalization and the full set of orthographic symbols, so as to ensure its accurate rendition.

<sup>6</sup> Versteegh (1984) went further and hypothesized that CLA underwent a process of mass pidginization and creolization after the conquests which resulted in the Arabic dialects. There is, however, no evidence that pidginization and creolization in the normally accepted definition of these terms occurred on anything like the scale envisaged. For counter-arguments, see the reviews of Goodman 1986, Holes 1986b; 2004a: 23–9, and Hopkins 1988.

<sup>7</sup> For an amusing account of several others, see Ferguson 1968 [1959]. Our main purpose in writing this book is to show how a more historically and socially grounded linguistic approach, despite the gaps in the historical record, can help trace the long-term dynamics and some of the detail of what happened.

Sasanian empires which the Arabs had conquered. Then, at the turn of the eighth century, they were phased out, and Arabic was imposed as the language of state records (Hoyland 2015: 213–14; *EI* art. *Ḳibt*). As far as *spoken* languages are concerned, the big picture was of widespread bilingualism/multilingualism, which persisted in some parts of the conquered territories for very many centuries. This has continued so up to the present day in parts of North Africa, where various varieties of Berber never died out in the mountainous regions, in contrast to Vulgar Latin, which quickly disappeared from the coastal plains. Coptic seems to have survived for longer in Middle and Upper Egypt, but by no later than c.1300 the Christian Copts had shifted to Arabic (Richter 2006: 495).<sup>8</sup> In parts of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey, however, pockets of neo-Aramaic speakers still survive.<sup>9</sup> Other large land masses—Persian- and Turkish-speaking Central Asia—were more thinly colonized and simply too vast ever to be completely (or even largely) Arabicized at the level of the ordinary population. In these areas, the indigenous languages eventually re-emerged as the literary standard as well as remaining the main spoken languages, but some pockets of Arabic-speakers still live on there (Seeger 2002; Ingham 2006; Zimmermann 2009).

From around the middle of the eighth century, the Arab grammarians of southern Iraq began codifying the rules of CLA—what eventually (but long after their time) became known as *al-luġatu l-fuṣṣḥā*, ‘the pure and eloquent language’. The timing of this enterprise was not fortuitous. Although the grammarians embarked upon it for reasons which they never make explicit, prime among them must have been the need to standardize the language for governmental, administrative, legal, religious, and literary use in what had by then become a geographically far-flung and ethnically diverse empire, without which written Arabic might have developed regionally in undesirably uncontrolled ways, or might not have been used at all. The grammarians were highly prescriptive: their aim was to specify, and enjoin the use of, the ‘best’ language, as it had come down to them in various sources: the ancient pre-Islamic poetry, the Qurʾān itself, the *ḥadīṭ* and *sīra* literature,<sup>10</sup> early accounts of the *ayyām al-ʿarab*,<sup>11</sup> and by direct elicitation from bedouin tribesmen of their time, whom they judged still to speak the ‘purest’ (*ʿaṣṣaḥ*) and ‘most trustworthy’ (*mawṭūq biḥā*) Arabic from the range of tribal dialects known to them. We know from their accounts and those of other early writers, such as the Iraqi polymath al-Jāḥiḍ (776–868), that dialectal variation in the spoken Arabic of their time was rife,<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The date when Coptic finally ceased to be a living language is, however, disputed. It has been claimed that there were still villages in Upper Egypt which were Coptic-speaking in the eighteenth century (see *EI* art. *Ḳibt*).

<sup>9</sup> Or did until recently. It is unclear at the time of writing (summer 2017) whether the activities of the so-called Islamic State have effectively ended their existence in Syria and Iraq.

<sup>10</sup> *ḥadīṭ* pl *aḥādīṭ* are the authenticated ‘sayings’ of the Prophet, of which there are several large collections. The *sīra* literature consists of early accounts of the Prophet’s life.

<sup>11</sup> lit. ‘the days of the Arabs’: early quasi-legendary accounts of pre-Islamic battles fought between the Arab tribes.

<sup>12</sup> For example, in his treatise *Kitāb al-Bayān wa l-Tabyīn* (‘The Book of Eloquence and Exposition’), al-Jāḥiḍ notes in passing the pronunciation of /r/ as /ġ/ by certain elite communities in the Baghdad of his time, a feature which still survives in some dialects of Iraq and the Fertile Crescent today (see Procházka, this volume).

even if they generally give little or no detail of it and what they do say is confused and sometimes even contradictory.<sup>13</sup> As Rabin (1951: 13) has commented:

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to discover why the philologists recorded just those dialect features they did. There is certainly no system in it. They never considered dialects as a form of speech in their own right, but as a collection of deviations from the literary language. All their data are measured on CLA, and we can often see quite clearly that they failed to see anything that did not fall within the categories of that idiom... The net result is that we have a great deal of information on minor points of dialect usage, but get only occasional glimpses of the major forms. We cannot reconstruct the complete paradigm of any tense in any dialect; we can hardly say with certainty what a complete word may have sounded like. The few glimpses we obtain prove that there were profound differences, the full nature of which will probably never be revealed to us.

This attested yet tantalizingly undescribed dialectal variation<sup>14</sup> cannot have appeared out of the blue: if this was the situation in the late eighth century, the spoken dialects must have been evolving since well before that date, and, indeed, well before the revelation of the Qurʾān—an inference supported by an ever-growing body of evidence from the decipherment of early inscriptions.<sup>15</sup> If so, the CLA of the eighth-century grammarians was a culturally and politically necessary distillation of an ancient elevated register of the language no longer identifiable (if it ever had been) with any particular dialect, but, as suggested earlier, long used in poetry, soothsaying, and other types of formal ritualized performance, in the way that, *mutatis mutandis*, it still is today. One of the main sources of the grammarians' data, the Qurʾān itself, shows orthographical peculiarities and grammatical deviations from the norms the grammarians subsequently established, which probably reflects the fact that the Meccan vernacular spoken by the Prophet did not fully conform to these later imposed norms, which reflected the usage of central/eastern Arabia, where most of the ancient poets came from, rather than that of the Hejazi coastal towns. If this is correct, dialectal variation in Arabic is again shown to be an ancient, not a recent phenomenon, and not simply the end result of the 'corruption' of CLA as a consequence of the imperfect learning of it by the conquered peoples, as has been proposed in traditional Arab and Western accounts alike. So, in answer to the question posed earlier, the language which the conquerors spoke and took with them to the new

<sup>13</sup> Kofler 1940–2 collected together the scattered information the early grammarians give about the tribal dialects of Arabia.

<sup>14</sup> For an attempt at a historical reconstruction of variation in the pre-Islamic Arabic dialects, see Magidow 2013.

<sup>15</sup> The earliest known reference to an Arab (Krebernik 2008: 257) mentions a chieftain called 'Gindibu' who contributed a thousand camels to an anti-Assyrian military coalition at the battle of Qarqar. It is also the first known record of an Arabic word: 'Gindibu' = CLA *gundub* 'grasshopper', and occurs in a cuneiform inscription on the Kurkh monolith of the neo-Assyrian monarch, Salmanassar III dated to 853 BC. The word *gundub* is attested among the Semitic languages only in Arabic, so it appears that Musil's remark (1928: 243) on the naming practices of the Rwala bedouin of the Syrian desert in the 1920s, that 'there is no beast nor plant after which a child cannot be named' may already have applied to the Arabs of two and a half millennia earlier. Inscriptions in Arabic for the first three centuries of the Common Era, though limited in number, also exist. See Al-Jallad 2018 for a summary of what is now known about the structure of Arabic at the very earliest period of its history.

territories outside Arabia must have been various regional/tribal dialects of Arabic.<sup>16</sup> As we shall see in the chapters which follow, there is evidence from a study of the geographical distribution of features in the modern dialects, when compared with what the medieval Arab historians say about population movements, to show that this was indeed probably the case.

Against this, however, a theory put forward by Ferguson (1978 [1959]) contained the proposition that the tribal dialects were koineized in military camps very early on, and that it was this shared koine, which came about ‘through a complex process of mutual borrowing and levelling’ over the first few Islamic centuries (Ferguson 1978: 51), and not CLA or individual tribal dialects, which formed the basis from which all the modern ‘sedentary’ Arabic dialects have developed since. How else, Ferguson argued, was it possible to explain how these dialects, now spread far and wide, share so many ‘complicated, systematically isolated’ features (he selects fourteen), none of which are shared with CLA, if they did not all originate from a common but non-Classical source? The unconnected polygenesis of so many novel and widespread features, he argues, seems highly unlikely. Ferguson excluded from his argument Arabian ‘bedouin’ dialects, which, he claimed, did not undergo koineization and followed a different trajectory. This theory was rebutted by Cohen (1962). Cohen argued that (a) some of Ferguson’s fourteen features could easily be explained as the result of natural linguistic change (‘drift’) over time; (b) others were far less widely shared than Ferguson claimed; and (c) yet others were a priori too all-encompassing for it to be proposed that they had been formed in a relatively short period of time as part of a koine formed in military camps. In sum, Cohen argued, it looks more likely that Ferguson’s features are the recent *end point* of a process of partial convergence than an ancient single *start point*. What has become clear from recent research on the modern ‘bedouin’ dialects is that many of Ferguson’s features occur in them also, even though, according to his theory, they did not undergo the phase of koineization. Nonetheless, they show similar developments to those of the ‘sedentary’ dialects, even if they have lagged behind in the speed at which these developments have occurred. Furthermore, it has also been shown by recent research that some early regional Arabic dialects were the product of the local mixing of elements from very specific and still easily identifiable locations. An example is the surviving Central Asian Arabic dialects, some of which have maintained, over thirteen centuries, a mixture of features which clearly mark them as of Iraqi and eastern/south-eastern Arabian origin, which is in line with what the early Arab historians had to say about the origins of the soldiery which conquered Transoxania (Holes 2011a; see also §1.3.1). From several points of view, Ferguson’s theory of a unitary ancient koine now seems untenable as a general explanation of how the modern Arabic dialects evolved.

Whilst the serious study of CLA in Europe began in the mid-seventeenth century, attention started to be paid to the spoken Arabic dialects only in the late nineteenth

<sup>16</sup> These dialects were not confined to those of Arabia. There is evidence for Arabic having been spoken in the Levant since Roman times, and even much earlier (see Lentin, this volume). The Levant was one of the sources of the early Muslim soldiery.

and early twentieth centuries.<sup>17</sup> Teaching manuals of the major urban dialects (especially Cairene) for the use of European expatriates also began to appear at this time.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, the publication in 1906 of Karl Vollers' *Volkssprache und Schriftsprache im alten Arabien* caused an earthquake by claiming that the Qurʾān was recited by the Prophet in a variety of Arabic which lacked the CLA vowel inflections of case and mood (*iʿrāb*), its most distinctive morphological feature, and that the linguistic character of the canonical text we have was actually a post hoc fabrication of the Arab philologists. Vollers' claim was never accepted by most scholars, but the debate it engendered led ultimately to a critical re-examination of the popular view of Arabic language history outlined earlier, and was one of the first steps towards the elaboration of a theory based on actual evidence. This came in two forms: early non-literary written documents which were discovered throughout the course of the twentieth century, and, just as importantly, and complementary to these, an ever-increasing number of detailed descriptions of the modern Arabic dialects. We will briefly examine each of these sources of evidence in turn.

## 1.2 EARLY WRITTEN EVIDENCE: 'MIDDLE ARABIC'/'MIXED ARABIC'

Non-literary papyri and paper documents in Arabic for the first three Islamic centuries (up to c.AD 912) now exist in abundance,<sup>19</sup> and one of the first detailed comparative analyses of their language can be found in Hopkins 1984. Though the range of their provenance is for climatic reasons limited to a few areas (mainly the Nile Valley and Palestine), these texts come in a wide variety of types: private and business letters, property deeds, marriage contracts, administrative surveys, lists and registers, passports, petitions, tax receipts, demands for payment, etc. The very fact that their content is so mundane gives them two advantages over literary material as linguistic evidence: (i) they are likely to reflect a register of the language closer to the

<sup>17</sup> In Germany by such scholars as Wetzstein (1868) (Syrian bedouin), Reinhardt (1894) (Oman), Socin (1900–1) (central Arabia), and Meissner (1903) (southern Iraq), and in France by Marçais (1902, 1908, 1911, among others) (N. Africa), Feghali (1928) (Lebanon), Barthélemy (1935–69) (the Levant), and Cantineau (1934, 1936, 1937, 1946) (Syria). And we must not forget the work of that eccentric but brilliant linguist and ethnographer, the Swedish aristocrat Le Comte de Landberg (1901, 1905, 1909, 1913, 1919, 1920–42) (South and Central Arabia). All of these scholars and more began the task of describing, on the basis of fieldwork done *in situ*, and long before the era of tape-recorders, how ordinary Arabs actually spoke to each other.

<sup>18</sup> Typical early examples are Wahrmond 1880, Spitta-Bey 1880, Vollers 1890, translated into English by Burkitt 1895, Cameron 1892, Spiro Bey 1895, Willmore 1901, and Gairdner 1926. Scholarly efforts to record and teach the Arabic dialects were, and in some quarters still are, dismissed by Arab opinion as part of a Western plot to divide and rule the Arabs through encouraging the use of the regional colloquials. Typical is the comment of Muḥammad Riḍa al-Shabibi, in an article entitled 'The chaos of the dialects' in the *Review of the Egyptian Language Academy* 12 (1966: 135): 'This call [to adopt the colloquial] is basically a colonialist scheme (*dasīsa istiʿmāriyya*) which has only been accepted by a few people terrified by the call of Islam.' Saʿīd (1964) expresses similar sentiments in a book-length treatment of the subject.

<sup>19</sup> At the time of writing, Hopkins (1984: xl) estimated the number of extant early papyri at 16,000 and early paper documents at c.33,000, in addition to several hundred texts on leather, parchment, linen, and other materials.

everyday spoken usage of their time; (ii) they have no literary value, so have escaped 'correction' by subsequent generations of editors wishing to make them conform to the norms of codified CLA.<sup>20</sup> There are even among the papyri a few bilingual texts, notably an early Greek–Arabic psalm fragment (Violet 1901) in which the Arabic text has been transcribed into Greek uncials, which was perhaps intended as a crib for those who spoke Arabic and were literate in Greek, but could not read the Arabic script. It is very rare among early documents in that it throws light on phonetic and phonological features, such as vowel quality and the realization of certain consonants (e.g. *qāf*), and morphological ones, such as the presence or absence of case and mood inflections, features not recoverable from ordinary unvocalized texts in the Arabic script. Hopkins' verdict (1984: xlvi) on these early written materials is unequivocal:

In almost every case in which the language of the Arabic papyri deviated from CLA, it deviated unmistakably in the direction of Middle Arabic, typologically akin to most of the modern colloquials. This language, therefore, lies fully within the mainstream of Middle Arabic, of which it is the earliest representative. A large proportion of the features attested later in medieval Jewish, Christian, and to a lesser extent, Muslim Middle Arabic, many of which are familiar today from modern dialects, occur here for the first time. This fact speaks for a very impressive continuity in colloquial Arabic usage, and the roots of the modern vernaculars are thus seen to lie very deep.

These comments require some scholarly context. The term 'Middle Arabic' first gained currency in the late 1950s/early 60s, in work by Joshua Blau, as a description of the language of medieval texts written in Judaeo-Arabic (= Arabic written by Jews in the Hebrew script, see Khan, this volume) and texts of a generally earlier date written by Christians typically in the Arabic script, but sometimes in the Syriac script, known as *karšūnī* (Blau 1981 [1965], 1966, 1988 (which is a collection of articles published over the previous twenty-five years)). These texts showed many systematic deviations from normative CLA but were seemingly not in 'pure dialect' either, leading Blau to label them the 'missing link' and 'the intermediate stage'<sup>21</sup> between CLA and the modern dialects. At this point in the scholarly debate, Middle Arabic was thus conceived of as a chronological stage in the development of Arabic, inviting analogies to 'Middle English' in the history of English. Subsequent work by many scholars (e.g. Lentin and Grand'Henry 2008), including Blau himself, has, however, highlighted three things:

- (a) The divergences of Middle Arabic from CLA which are dialectal are not random, but, in the main, rather specific, typically affecting certain classes of morphological items and syntactic structures, and reflecting typological similarities shared by a wide range of spoken dialects.
- (b) Middle Arabic texts contain many forms which are neither Classical nor dialectal but 'hypercorrect' or 'hybrid' (see Khan, this volume), and they occur in texts of different geographical provenances over a long period of

<sup>20</sup> Examples of 'deviant' features in early recensions of the ancient Arabic poetry, by contrast, have indeed often been ironed out in later copies as a result of this process.

<sup>21</sup> Blau 1988: 61. This article ('The importance of Middle Arabic dialects for the history of Arabic') was first published in 1961.



time. Mid-nineteenth-century documents from the Arabian Gulf sheikhdoms, for example (Holes 2008a), show a range of hypercorrect and hybrid features similar to those of texts from Egypt and the Levant of a much earlier period, and, for that matter, to those which occur in ‘mixed’ styles of Arabic spoken today (Mejdell 2008). They are the result of the long-term coexistence of and contact between two systems, the naturally acquired dialectal one and the institutionally acquired CLA one, and often do not belong to a chronological phase of any spoken dialect. Over a long period, it seems that many of these hypercorrect and hybrid features have become part of the inventory of ‘mixed’ forms typical of an informal style of writing as well as a semi-formal style of speaking.

- (c) There is no linguistically principled way of distinguishing the language of Middle Arabic texts from that of non-CLA texts which predate and others that post-date them: all are composed in varieties of Arabic on a spectrum containing different mixtures of CLA, dialectal, hypercorrect, and hybrid features.

Blau’s most recent pronouncement (Blau 1999: 223–4) is that ‘MA [Middle Arabic] is not an exclusively medieval phenomenon. It refers rather to Arabic texts of mixed character in general, and MA can be found at the present time as well’. The ‘communal’ aspect of MA was the dominant focus of debate early on: it was hypothesized that the relative paucity of documents in Middle Arabic written by Muslims compared to Jews and Christians was due to their better knowledge of, and culturally instilled closer adherence to, the norms of CLA. Later discoveries and further work have called this idea into question also. In fact, Muslim Middle Arabic documents exist in quantity, and, with the obvious differences of religion-specific vocabulary, are typologically akin to those written by non-Muslims. It has also become clear that choice of style—whether a text is in ‘mixed’ Arabic or a style closer to CLA on the one hand, or to dialect on the other—is related to contextual factors: what the text was about, why it was written, and who it was intended for.

A few typical features of early (from c.tenth century) and ‘Middle Arabic’ texts selected from various sources<sup>22</sup> are:

- (a) reflecting widespread non-CLA dialectal features:
- (i) in phonology, as reflected in the orthography:
- loss of the glottal stop in all positions, e.g. بقا (*baqā*) ‘(continued) life’, cf. CLA بقاء (*baqāʾ*), رأس (*rās*) ‘head’, cf. CLA رأس (*raʾs*), الول (*alawwal*) ‘the first’, cf. CLA الاول (*al-ʾawwal*);
  - initial *ʾalif* to indicate a prosthetic vowel before a consonant-cluster resulting from the deletion of an unstressed short vowel in a CV syllable in initial position, e.g. خمسة احمور (*xamsat aḥmūr*) ‘five asses’, cf. CLA خمسة حمور (*xamsatu ḥumūr*); اتقول = *itʾūl/ itqūl/ itgūl* (depending on the dialect) ‘you (m) say’ cf. CLA تقول = *taqūlu/a*.
- (ii) morphosyntax:

<sup>22</sup> Mainly the articles in Lentin and Grand’Henry 2008 and Hopkins 1984. These sources contain examples from as early as the eighth and as late as the nineteenth century.



## The NP

- sound pl suffixes not marked for case: always *-in* not *-ūn/-īn*, and dual *-ayn* (or *-ēn*) not *-ān* / *-ayn*;
- the *-n* of the sound pl and dual suffixes retained in annexation structures (unlike the situation in CLA), e.g. *ḥāmilīn al-awsāq* ‘carriers of burdens’, *ṣayyādīn as-samak* ‘fishermen’, *miyatayn ḡulūd* ‘two hundred skins’;
- *-in/-an* adnominal linker suffixed to indefinite nouns with an adjunct: *yawm-an kāmīl* ‘a complete day’, *ḏanb-an kabīr* ‘a great sin’, *taʿārīf-in minnā* ‘notifications from us’;
- use of genitive particles *mtāʿ*, *btāʿ*, etc. instead of the annexation structure, e.g. *as-sāniya mtāʿ aṭ-ṭubānḡiya* ‘the farm belonging to the gunners’;
- N+ def article +N for the def NP with an attributive adjective: *šahr al-fulānī* ‘the such-and-such month’, *waṣāyā l-ḥasana* ‘the good pieces of advice’.

## The pronoun

- personal pronouns follow the dialectal systems, e.g. *iḥna*, *niḥna* ‘we’; *intu* ‘you (pl)’;
- ‘what?’, ‘why?’, and other interrogative pronouns based on forms derived from š (< *šayy* < *šayʿ* ‘thing’) e.g. *ayš*, *wēš*, *lēš*, *lāš*, and similar;
- invariant relative pronoun *illi/ alli*.

## The verb and verb-phrase

- *-ī* and *-ū* not *-in* and *-ūn* and in the 2fsng and 2 and 3pl ending of the p-stem verb;
- loss of gender distinctions in the pl of the verb, and loss of the dual e.g. *-tū* (com pl) not *-tum* (mpl), *-tunna* (fpl), *-tumā* (dual) in the s-stem;
- use of preformatives to mark mood and tense in the p-stem verb, e.g. *b-*;
- *mā* the default negative particle for all verbs, p-stem or s-stem;
- loss of the apophonic passive, with a compensatory increase in the use of the passivizing prefix of pattern VII, *in-*;
- loss of pattern IV of the verb, and its replacement by patterns I or II. (iii) in lexis
- dialectal rather than CLA items for very common verbs, e.g. *ḡa* ‘to come’, *ḡāb* ‘to bring’, *šāf* ‘to see’, *rāḡ* ‘to go’.

## Regional particularities:

Documents may also reflect more localized dialectal forms:

- loss of the interdental: *ت* (*t*) for *ث* (*t*), *د* (*d*) for *ذ* (*d*), *ض* (*d*) for *ظ* (*d*): in documents from Egypt and the Levant, reflecting the urban dialects of those regions;
- *n-... / n-... u* for 1sng and 1pl p-stem verbs: in Andalusian and Maghrebi texts;
- intrusive *-in(n)-* in active participle + suffixed pronoun forms, e.g. *wāṣlatinnak* ‘has come to you’: in the Gulf, reflecting the local spoken use of this form;
- *hāḏī* ‘this (f)’ used to refer to both m and f nouns: in the Gulf, reflecting spoken usage.

(b) substandard, hypercorrect and ‘hybrid’ forms:

- the CLA msgng relative pronoun *allaḍī* used substandardly as an all-purpose relative pronoun, i.e., not the full CLA system of gender and number agreement but a saliently CLA form substituting for the dialectal invariant form *illi/alli*, e.g. with f antecedent noun: *hāḍihi l-marra allaḍī*... ‘this occasion which...’; with grammatically mpl antecedent: *al-qubaysāt allaḍī hum*... ‘the Qubaysat who are...’. These two examples are from the nineteenth century, but the same types of substandard use occur in much earlier Egyptian/Levantine material, e.g. with grammatically f antecedent noun: *fa inna š-šiqāq allaḍī baʿaṭt bihā*... ‘the kerchiefs which you sent...’;
- hypercorrect use of CLA case-marker *tanwīn-an* (with orthographic ʾ*alif*) on indefinite adjectives and nouns, seemingly as a marker of emphasis, e.g. *ana ḥayrān-an* ‘I am confused’; *hāḍī tābit-an ʿind al-ḡamiʿ* ‘this is well-known to all’: early modern Levant and nineteenth-century Gulf; CLA demonstratives *ḍālika* (m) and *tilka* (f) ‘that’ used interchangeably and substandardly with nouns of either gender: the Levant;
- CLA negative particle *lam* used hypercorrectly with the s-stem verb forms, e.g. *lam atā maʿāhu* ‘he did not come with him’: Egypt, Levant, Gulf;
- CLA 3rd person *laysa* ‘(is) not’ used hypercorrectly as an invariable negative particle with any person of the p-stem verb, and in nominal sentences, e.g. *laysa rāḍiyīn* ‘they are not satisfied’, *ḡanābukum laysa tarḍūna* ‘Your Honour will not be content’, *wa laysa aḥtāḡ* ‘and I do not need...’: Gulf, Egypt, Levant;
- dialectal verb preformative *b-* combined with saliently CLA p-stem verb morphology to form ‘hybrids’ which are neither fully dialectal nor CLA, e.g. *b-yuʿād* ‘will be sent back’: Gulf.

Non-literary early and Middle/Mixed Arabic texts can thus yield valuable evidence for the early occurrence of modern dialectal features. The drawbacks are that the documents are representative of certain locations only, and some aspects of their morphophonology remain hidden by the nature of the Arabic script. And one must always bear in mind that even non-literary materials are not exact mirrors of speech. Judging what the stylistic value of some items is requires local context: the syntax of the relative pronoun *allaḍī*, for instance, which might look like a ‘substandard’ CLA feature in all the examples listed, may not have had quite the same stylistic value in the nineteenth-century Gulf as it did in medieval Cairo and the pre-modern Levant, since we know that in some of the modern Gulf dialects, variant forms such as *ilaḍī*, *iladī*, and *illidi*, cognate with CLA *allaḍī*, were still in everyday spoken use as recently as the 1970s alongside the more widespread *illi* (Holes 2016: 93, 387–91). In the nineteenth-century Gulf documents, the written form *الذي* (*allaḍī*) may simply have been a representation of the spelling of a common dialectal form, not a conscious Classicism, as it probably was in Cairo. A similar issue is the *-īn* and *-ūn* endings on p-stem verbs: these endings in Middle Arabic documents from Egypt and the Levant may be an attempt at a ‘high’ CLA-like style, since the contemporaneous spoken dialects probably lacked these endings; but the same inflections in Gulf documents would not have had the same stylistic value, as the *-īn* and *-ūn* endings are the normal dialectal forms in that region up to the present day.

### 1.3 EARLY DIALECTAL ARABIC

As we have already noted, the early and medieval Arab grammarians give us only meagre information about the Arabic dialects of their day, typically in the form of the ‘peculiarities’ of a certain tribe’s dialect (when measured, of course, against their codified CLA). Some of these peculiarities are still current today. An alternative, richer, and more specific source of information about dialect history is from surviving Arabic *Sprachinseln*—Arabic dialects which, for a variety of reasons, were historically cut off from later Arab influence, whether through the immigration of speakers of ‘heartland’ Arabic dialects or the homogenizing tendencies brought by the spread of literacy in CLA. These *Sprachinseln* have preserved what must, in some cases, be early dialectal forms. We will look briefly at both of these data sources.

#### 1.3.1 OA DIALECTAL FEATURES

The early grammarians conceptualized certain common features of the Arabian tribal dialects of their time as incorrect deviations from CLA. These features were mainly phonological and were given names such as *laxlaxāniyya*, *ṭumṭumāniyya*, *kaškaša*, *taltala*, *ʿağrada*, *rutta*, and many others. In some cases these names seem to have been mimetic of the sounds they denote, but in others they are vague, used by different writers to mean different things, and/or are ascribed to different tribes. Many of them seem to mean little more than English lay terms like ‘speaking with a lilt’, ‘drawling’, ‘gabbling’, etc. (Rabin 1951: 10). However, there are a few which can be related to still extant dialectal features:

- *kaškaša*: most probably<sup>23</sup> this was the affrication of /k/ to an alveolar /č/ when the /k/ which forms part of the 2fsng pronoun enclitic *-ki* was in pause and its final vowel was dropped by general rule, e.g. \*bayt-V-ki (where ‘V’ is the case vowel) → \*bayt-V-k# → \*bayt-V-č# ‘your (fsng) house’. The tribal dialects which the grammarians said had this feature were in the north/north-east of Arabia. Sībawaih (d. 793) explained *kaškaša* as the ‘addition’ of /š/ to /ki/, the 2fsng pronoun enclitic, when in utterance-final position, so, e.g. bayt-u-ki ‘your (f) house’ → bayt-uk# → baytu-kš#. To his way of thinking, the reason for this ‘addition’ was that speakers needed to preserve the gender distinction with the m form *baytuka* which would otherwise have been lost, since the m form also lost its final short vowel in pause by general rule. Sībawaih’s descriptive difficulty was that there is no CLA sound /č/ (= IPA [tʃ])—which is what he was probably actually hearing—so he got around this problem by explaining it as the phonetically similar [k+ʃ], i.e. not as a sound change but as the *suffixation* of [ʃ] (which *is* a CLA sound) to the pausal form of the CLA 2fsng enclitic. Such reductive reasoning was not untypical of him.

<sup>23</sup> See Hopkins 2004 for a more detailed discussion of what the grammarians may have meant by this term.

This /č/ for the 2fsng enclitic, but now generalized to all positions, not just pause, is found today throughout north-eastern and eastern Arabia, southern Iraq, and parts of the UAE, e.g. *bēt-ič* ‘your (fsng) house’, *abū-č* ‘your (fsng) father’. Dialects which have these forms also affricate /k/ in many common lexical items, generally in front-vowel environments, e.g. *čibīr* ‘big, old’, *hādīč* ‘this (f)’. Significantly, the alveolar affricate /č/ < /k/ also occurs in some of the Central Asian Arabic dialects and must have been an early ‘export’ (see *Sprachinseln* §1.3.2, and Holes, Procházka, this volume). Many of the Arabian dialects which affricated etymological /k/ → /č/ in front vowel environments also affricated /g/ (< OA /q/) → /ğ/, thus forming a pair of voiced–voiceless alveolar affricates.

- *kaskasa*: similar to *kaškaša*, but involving the shift of the /k/ of the 2fsng suffix to a dental affricate /č/ (= IPA [ts]) in front-vowel environments, so, e.g. \**bayt-ič* ‘your (fsng) house’. The grammarians ascribed this feature to various north Arabian tribes. Today, it is typical of the dialects of Najd, central Saudi Arabia, e.g. *bēt-ič* ‘your (fsng) house’, and like the alveolar affricate, it also occurs in many common lexical items, e.g. *čibīr* ‘big, old’. Dialects which underwent this change also have a dental affricate /ğ/ (= IPA [dz]) < /g/ < OA /q/ to form a pair of dental affricates.
- *šinšinna*: this apparently referred to the general Yemeni change \*k → š, which produced a dialectal reflex /š/ of the /k/ for the 2fsng enclitic pronoun, e.g. \**bayt-iš* ‘your(fsng) house’. The term *fašfaša* was used to refer to the same phenomenon, and was sometimes called *fašfašat ših*r (Rabin 1951: 50) after the southern Yemeni port of Shihr, where it was part of the dialect. Today, this /š/ reflex of the 2fsng pronoun enclitic is a typically south Arabian feature found in Yemen and south-western Saudi Arabia, Oman, parts of the UAE, and in the Baḥārna (Shī‘i) dialects of Bahrain and neighbouring eastern Saudi Arabia, e.g. *bēt-iš* ‘your (fsng) house’, *abū-š* ‘your (fsng) father’<sup>24</sup> (see Holes, Watson, this volume).
- *‘an‘ana*: defined as the substitution of the voiced pharyngeal fricative /‘/ for the glottal stop /ʔ/. This feature is well known today in eastern Arabian dialects in a few high-frequency items, e.g. *‘ağall* / *‘ayal* for *ʔağal* ‘so, then, well’, *‘an* for the complementizer *ʔan*, ‘that’, *‘afar* (< *ʔatar*) ‘it may be that’, and lives on in modern borrowings such as *‘angrēz* ‘English (people)’, *‘askrīm* ‘ice-cream’, *‘ananās* ‘pineapple’ (Holes 2016: 55, 63).
- *taltala*: an ancient feature exhibited by certain old tribal dialects of central, eastern, and northern Arabia (Rabin 1951: 61) whereby the prefix vowel of the p-stem (imperfect) verb was *i* rather than *a* as in CLA. This feature is still widespread in the dialects of eastern Arabia today but may well have been

<sup>24</sup> It seems unlikely, given its geographical distribution, that this /š/ was a development of /č/. It is more likely to be a substrate element of the ancestral forms of the Modern South Arabian languages, which also have /š/ or similar forms for the 2fsng enclitic, and which survived in early Yemeni Arabic dialects, from whence it spread east and north via later migrations (see Holes 1991 for a detailed exposition of the history of the various Arabian Peninsula reflexes of /k/ in the 2fsng enclitic pronoun).

‘exported’ early (and/or have arisen separately) in many areas outside Arabia (see Lentin, this volume).

- *al-qāf at-tamīmiyya*, lit. ‘the *qāf* of the tribe of Tamīm’: this was most probably a voiced velar stop \*[g], which is the normal reflex of *qāf* in all the modern typologically ‘bedouin’ dialects of northern, central, eastern, and south-eastern Arabia, and many other dialects outside the Arabian Peninsula, all of which were originally ‘bedouin’ or underwent historical bedouinization. Examples: *gāl* ‘he said’, *ṣagar* ‘falcon’, *ḥagg* ‘right, entitlement’ (see Holes, Procházka, Taine-Cheikh, this volume).

A number of other archaic features of the modern Arabian Peninsula dialects turn up, rather surprisingly, in dialects remote from modern Arabia in both space and time. The features concerned still exist in the modern dialects spoken in the areas of Arabia from which the early migrants to these far-flung places originally came, insofar as this is known (Spain, for example, had an influx of ‘Yemenis’,<sup>25</sup> Central Asia had one of tribesmen of Iraqi and eastern Arabian origin). The geographically peripheral position of the dialects concerned—Central Asia, West Africa, and, in the past, Andalusia—meant that they remained relatively untouched by later homogenizing influences and retained these unusual features. Some examples:

- the combination of a /q/ reflex of OA *qāf* and a /g/ reflex of OA *ġīm*, the norm in both south Yemeni and Omani ‘sedentary’ dialects, is typical of some varieties of Andalusian Arabic (cf. Corriente 1977: 50–1, 53–4, who specifically notes the Andalusian /g/ reflex of *ġīm* as of ‘Yemenite’ origin<sup>26</sup>);
- reflexes of the CLA pre-verbal particle *qad*<sup>27</sup> (= *qad*, *gad*, *ġid*, *čid*) are still found widely in central, eastern, and southern Arabia though with changed functions; the ‘parent’ form *qad* is frequent in Andalusian Arabic (cf. Corriente 1977: 129);
- *qaṭ/ gaṭ < qaṭṭ*, a particle of negative emphasis in CLA, is still widely used in eastern and southern Arabia, e.g. *lā gaṭ min ḥayātna marrēna bēt* ‘We never once visited anyone’s house’ (Holes 2001: 429); in Spanish Arabic its cognate *qaṭ* could be used in the same way to reinforce any negative, e.g. in nominal sentences like *lis qaṭ maʿi šuġal* ‘I never have any work’ (Corriente 1977: 145);

<sup>25</sup> That is, ‘Yemeni’ according to medieval Arab historical sources. It seems there was indeed a geographically and linguistically Yemeni element among the incomers, but ‘Yemeni’ also had a political meaning, ‘Yemeni’ origin being fraudulently asserted by some who sought to gain an advantage in status by claiming a Yemeni and therefore ‘pure Arab’ origin when they were not from Yemen at all.

<sup>26</sup> A caveat must be entered here, however. This combination of reflexes of *qāf* and *ġīm* is rather uncommon in the modern Arabic dialects, but the fact that it occurs today mainly in parts of Yemen and Oman does not prove that these places must have been its origin in Andalusian Arabic. All that this shows is that in all these dialects—Andalusian, Yemeni, Omani—this combination of reflexes is a shared retention, and it may have been much more geographically widespread thirteen centuries ago, when Spain was first colonized by Arabic speakers, than it is now. In and of itself, the presence of these reflexes in Andalusian Arabic proves nothing about their origin (see van Putten 2017 for a rebuttal of Corriente’s arguments concerning the claimed ‘Yemeni’ origin of many features of Andalusian Arabic).

<sup>27</sup> See Holes 2016: 266–72 for data and references to the literature.

- the invariant negative particle *lēs* ‘not’ (cf. the CLA verb *laysa* ‘to not be’) survives in southern and eastern Arabia in this fossilized form, e.g. *lēs lēh bidd* ‘he has no alternative’, *lēs ṣaḥīḥ* ‘that isn’t true’ (Holes 2001: 487 for Bahrain; see also Reinhardt 1894: 282 for Oman) and also turns up in Sinai in the form *lās* and the reduced form *s-: lās bidd, s-bidd* ‘there is no alternative, no doubt’ (Holes and Abu Athera 2009: 238; Bailey 1991: 430).<sup>28</sup> This particle is also found in the invariant forms *lis/ las* in Andalusia (cf. Corriente 1977: 144; 2006: 106). As we have already noted, its CLA cognate, *laysa*, is used in the same way as an invariant negative particle in Middle Arabic texts.
- the ‘adnominal linker’ *-in/-an* (see §1.2) is common in central, eastern, and southern Arabia, and occurs with a similar form and function in a wide range of typologically ‘bedouin’ or ‘bedouin’-descended dialects in Jordan and the northern Fertile Crescent (Procházka, this volume). It also occurs with an identical form and function in the Central Asian dialects (Holes 2011a: 90, and for references), in eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 190), in Nigeria (Owens 1993b: 111, 140, 144) and in early Andalusian Arabic (Corriente 1977: 121–2; 2006: 109; Ferrando, this volume). Examples: *bint-in zēna* ‘a nice girl’ (Gulf), *zamān-an āxar* ‘another time’ (Andalusia); *lafḍ-in ‘arabiyye* ‘an Arabic dialect’ (Khorasan, northern Iran); *bitt-an kabīra* ‘a grown-up girl’ (eastern Sudan); *bagar-an kubār* ‘big cattle’ (Nigeria).
- the infix *-in(n)-* inserted between the active participle and a suffixed pronoun when it has verbal force e.g. *bāyinnah* ‘he has stolen it’, *māxḍatinnah* ‘she has taken/married him’, a rare feature, typical only of some eastern Arabian, south Yemeni, and virtually all Omani dialects (see Holes 2011a and this volume), is also found in all the dialects of Central Asia (Holes 2011a: 83–4 and for references), eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 284), and Nigeria (Owens 1993a: 102).
- definite NPs which lack the definite article on the defined noun but have it on the adjective, e.g. *bāb iṣ-ṣarḡi* ‘the eastern gate’ (Baghdad) are common in eastern and south-eastern Arabian dialects (Holes 2016: 213–15). This feature is also found widely in the ‘sedentary’ dialects of the Levant (Feghali 1928: 134–6; Procházka, this volume); Iraq (Erwin 1963: 365, 367; Blanc 1964: 126–7), and again in Andalusia (Corriente 1977: 123; 2006: 109).

These features have been selected because of their relative rarity in the modern Arabic dialects as a whole, and their unusual distributional profile. How is one to decide whether such features are instances of polygenesis or monogenesis followed by diffusion? As a general principle, for features widely dispersed but shown by comparative dialectology to be formally and functionally similar and at the same time rare, the single origin explanation is likely to be the correct one (Owens 2006: 161–2). On this view, the features exemplified were probably ‘exported’ from Arabia (or in the case of the last one, possibly more than one ‘eastern’ location) at an early date, and then, in some cases, to judge by what is known of the demographic history of where they are now found, re-exported at a later date by further waves of

<sup>28</sup> Holes and Abu Athera 2009: 238 sub the lemma *bdd*.

migration/re-migration. This almost certainly explains the distribution of the rare *-in(n)-* infix construction already noted (see Holes, this volume, for details). The presence of many of the features listed in early Andalusian Arabic is especially significant, as it testifies to their age.

### 1.3.2 SPRACHINSELN

Another important source of evidence for what the Arabic dialects were like in the past are *Sprachinseln* ('speech islands')—remote communities of Arabic speakers which were cut off and did not receive any fresh infusions of 'linguistic blood' from 'heartland' Arabic-speaking areas after a certain point in their history, and in which literacy in CLA was never widespread. A good example is Malta, where a variant of Siculo-Arabic was spoken until the end of the eleventh century and the Normans' conquest, after which all contact with Arabic-speaking communities ceased. Cyprus also has a 'relic' Arabic dialect, originally spoken in Kormakiti in the north-east of the island, which may originally have been brought there by Maronites fleeing persecution in the ninth century, though a later influx in the twelfth/thirteenth century has been proposed by some, see Borg (2006: 536–7), who comments: 'the sociocultural parallel between Cypriot Arabic and Maltese is particularly close... since, in both cases, we are dealing with an Arabic vernacular surviving in complete isolation from the Arabic-speaking world, exposed to interaction with a variety of Indo-European (Italian and English in the case of Maltese, Greek in that of Cypriot Arabic), and spoken by Catholic Christians in a Mediterranean and insular sociocultural habitat'. Other examples of long-term isolation are the scattered communities of Arabic speakers in the vast Oxus valley of Central Asia (in modern N. Iran, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan), conquered by the Arabs in the early eighth century. Here, contact with Arabic speakers external to the region virtually ceased after the tenth century, and the influence of Persian and Turkish became very strong. Nonetheless, these are still today instantly recognizable as Arabic dialects of mixed Iraqi and eastern/south-eastern Arabian origin, such is their similarity to the dialects still spoken in those places today. This fits with what the historian al-Ṭabarī (839–923) tells us about the tribal affiliations of the troops cantoned in Basra in the late seventh/ early eighth century that went on to conquer Transoxania, of which around 30% were from the Azd and 'Abd al-Qays, two large tribes living at that time in what is now eastern Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE/Oman (Holes 2011a: 85–8). A local Omani history written in the eleventh century (Hinds 1984; 1991: 14–15) states that 3,000 Omani soldiers crossed directly to the south coast of Iran from Julanda (modern Rās al-Khayma) in AD 694 without going via Basra.

## 1.4 SUBSTRATES AND BORROWING

The language(s) which predated the arrival of Arabic have often left vestiges in it, mainly lexical but in some cases phonological and morphological. In the dialects of North Africa, there is a modest Berber substrate, the result of 'imperfect group



learning during a process of language shift' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 20ff.; see Aguadé, Taine-Cheikh, this volume) that is mainly lexical, but has a few morphological elements too, as well as a smattering of Vulgar Latin vocabulary from earlier colonists (Aguadé, this volume). At the other end of the Arab World, a substantial example of a substrate is to be found in certain north Yemeni dialects, where fundamental elements of inflectional morphology have been affected, producing inter alia the so-called *k*-perfect verb paradigm, unique in the Arabic-speaking world, and the /š/ reflex of the 2fsng enclitic pronoun referred to in §1.3.1 as *šinšinna*, which may then have been 'exported' from Yemen to the east and south-east of Arabia via later migrations (see Watson, Holes, this volume). The problem here, though, is our limited knowledge of the language which, historical accounts of Yemen's demography suggest, lies behind these apparently substrate elements: Ḥimyaritic (Robin 2007), a Semitic relative of Arabic whose speakers dominated the south-west of the Arabian Peninsula from the first century BC to the sixth century AD. We know from the tenth-century Yemeni historian al-Hamdānī (d. 946) that the remote locations where 'pure Ḥimyaritic' was spoken in his day (see Rabin 1951: 42–53, esp. the map on p.46 extrapolated from al-Hamdānī's description) are precisely the regions of Yemen where the putative substrate Ḥimyaritic elements are found today (cf. Behnstedt 1985: 116, map 68).<sup>29</sup>

In the Gulf region, there is evidence of non-Arabic Semitic vocabulary in certain domains, notably agricultural practices and toponyms, but also, arguably, in morphosyntax (Holes, this volume), of Mesopotamian origin. This is unsurprising given the centuries of political and economic contact and control which the Babylonians and their predecessors exercised over the northern Gulf littoral. But, again, because we know so little about the early language history of this region, it is difficult to be sure whether these (now obsolescent) Gulf Arabic words with cognates in Aramaic/Akkadian are the remains of (a) a substrate; (b) ancient contact-induced borrowing; (c) more recent borrowing (i.e. an 'adstrate') from other Arabic dialects (or Persian) into which the Aramaic/Akkadian items had been borrowed at an earlier period; or (d) a combination of more than one of these processes occurring at different periods of history (see Holes, this volume).

Aramaic also had an influence on the lexis and possibly certain morphological and syntactic structures of the Arabic dialects of the Levant and northern Fertile Crescent (i.e. of northern Iraq, Syria, and southern Turkey (see the chapters of Procházka, Lentin, this volume)). On the other hand, the Egyptian dialects show virtually

<sup>29</sup> The Ḥimyarites left many inscriptions, but the vast majority of them are written in late forms of Sabaic, a much older 'imperial' language of south-west Arabia, to which they considered themselves heirs. Only three inscriptions (all poetry) seem to be in the different idiom, which has been dubbed, because of these differences, 'Ḥimyaritic', but the texts are very difficult to decipher with any certainty. It has recently been argued (Stein 2008) that the differences in these three texts are in fact illusory, and that in all probability the Ḥimyarites spoke a form of late Sabaic as well as using it in their inscriptions. Whatever the truth of this claim, it does not affect the argument advanced here, since late Sabaic/Ḥimyaritic contains exactly the same 'non-Arabic' morphological elements (e.g. the *k*-perfect, *daw* as a negative particle, see Watson, this volume) which occur in no other Arabic dialect and which must therefore be the substrate source of these same elements in the Yemeni Arabic dialects which have them.



nothing which could be described as a Coptic substrate (Behnstedt 2006a; Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume), but rather small-scale borrowing in limited areas, especially rural terminology—measures of size and weight, tools, irrigation terms, soil and field types. This situation is probably a consequence of the early, rapid, and large-scale migration of the Arabs into Egypt.

## 1.5 DIALECT GEOGRAPHY AND TYPOLOGY

As with any language, major differences between Arabic dialects are associated with geography. Thus it is possible, on the basis of a few basic and more or less coinciding isoglosses, to draw a distinction between the ‘Maghrebi’ dialects of Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and the western part of Libya, on the one hand and the Mashreqi dialects of eastern Libya, Egypt, the Levant, Iraq, Arabia, on the other. On either side of this broad geographical division, many subdivisions and subdivisions of subdivisions could be drawn almost ad infinitum, down to the level of differences between neighbouring villages. But the reality is that differences on individual variables are by nature sometimes neither binary nor sharp, and there is a vast array of many hundreds of individual variables, on each of which the isoglosses marking where the use of one variant begins and another ends do not exactly coincide. If a dialect can be defined as a bundle of variants shared by a community of speakers, this does not alter the fact that boundaries between dialects are almost always fuzzy (as are the boundaries of their associated ‘communities of speakers’); indeed, the very concept of distinct dialects may be more a convenient descriptive idealization of linguists than it is an observable reality on-the-ground. That said, it is of course true that if one looks at the dialects of a pair of Arabic-speaking cities remote from each other, such as Casablanca and Cairo, the differences between the two are many and striking, and can reach the point of mutual incomprehensibility in the case of uneducated speakers of their plain colloquials. Nonetheless, there are no ‘dialect borders’ between the two that correspond to geographical, still less political ones—just a continuum of imperceptible, gradual change from one place to the next as the traveller moves across the thousands of kilometres between the two cities. That much is familiar from research on the dialect geography of virtually any language. In Arabic, however, the picture is complicated by the existence of a pervasive and ancient typological distinction which cross-cuts the geographical one: that between so-called ‘bedouin’ (*badawī*) and ‘sedentary’ (*ḥaḍarī*) dialects. There are even subdivisions here, too: in the Levant, the ‘sedentary’ dialects can be subdivided into distinct ‘urban’ (*madanī*) and ‘rural’ (*fallāḥī*) varieties.

Little is known about how, when, and where the ‘bedouin’ versus ‘sedentary’ distinctions first arose, but statements are often made to the effect that ‘bedouin’ dialects are ‘more conservative’ than ‘sedentary’ dialects, on the grounds that ‘they retain many ‘Classical’ features lost elsewhere’ (Rosenhouse 2006: 259).<sup>30</sup> Such statements are

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed account of so-called ‘bedouin’ features, see Rosenhouse 1984.

problematic. Part of the problem is that they imply that CLA existed as an invariant linguistic monolith once spoken by a community of native speakers at some unspecified point in the distant past, rather than the outcome of a process of selection and codification by eighth-century schoolmen in Iraq. In this scenario, CLA is seen as the ‘parent’ of both dialect types which descended from it, whereas the reverse is arguably the case: the old dialects of Arabic predated CLA (or more precisely predated its codification by the grammarians), because old features such as the adnominal linker *-in/an* and the *-in(n)-* infix occur in both dialect types and, circumstantial evidence suggests (Holes, this volume), must have been in spoken Arabic by no later than the end of the seventh century and probably well before this—even if they were not deemed sufficiently ‘pure’ to make it into the grammarians’ codified CLA. Secondly, even if we were to accept the eighth-century grammarians’ CLA as the yardstick of conservatism, it is not always true that the ‘bedouin’ dialects are ‘more conservative’. An oft-quoted example is the bedouin ‘retention’ of the CLA interdental fricatives /*t̪*, *d̪*, *ð̪*/ in contrast to the ‘innovating’ ‘sedentary’ dialects which have stops, /*t*, *d*, *ð*/. This may be true for large Levantine cities, but it is not elsewhere in that region: many Palestinian village dialects, otherwise ‘sedentary’ in character, also have the CLA/‘bedouin’ fricatives. Further afield, all Omani dialects without exception, whether they are otherwise typologically ‘bedouin’ or ‘sedentary’, also have the fricative series. In morphology too, the ‘bedouin’ dialects are said to be more conservative because, for example, they retain, like CLA, gender distinctions in plural forms of the verb, whereas the ‘sedentary’ ones have lost them. But again, this is an oversimplification: there are typologically ‘bedouin’ dialects (e.g. of Sunnī Bahrain, of Kuwait, of Muslim Baghdad) which have ‘lost’ these gender distinctions and many ‘sedentary’ ones (e.g. of southern Yemen and Oman) which have ‘retained’ them. It all depends on the choice of which ‘bedouin’ or ‘sedentary’ dialects one looks at, and of which dialectal features. Region is also a factor within the ‘bedouin’ type: the phonotactic feature called the ‘*gahawa/ghawa* syndrome’ (see Glossary) is unquestionably a ‘bedouin only’ feature,<sup>31</sup> but it is regional, being typical of the eastern Arab World only, its westernmost attestation being in Cyrenaica (de Jong 2007: 151). The ‘bedouin’ dialects of Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania do not seem to have it at all. This total absence is perhaps an indication that these Maghrebi ‘bedouin’ dialects were brought from areas of Arabia (the west?) which never had this feature.

The problem is that the distinction between ‘bedouin’ and ‘sedentary’ dialects, though to some degree still valid and useful, is not expressed everywhere by the same set of contrasts (Holes 1996). This is because of the different demographic and social histories of different areas of the Arabic-speaking world, in which the ecological bedouin/sedentary lifestyle divide was not always sharp—indeed, it is quite normal in southern Arabia for one tribe to have sedentary and bedouin sections living in a symbiotic relationship and for both to use exactly the same dialect (the Omani Durū‘ are an example), a set-up which is not found in northern Arabia. Individual ‘bedouin’

<sup>31</sup> Some ‘sedentary’ dialects of Upper Egypt have it (de Jong 2007: 151), but here it appears to be the result of the long-term ‘bedouinization’.

dialects, however, despite the huge distances which separate them, often show extraordinary similarities. To give one personal example: when, in the mid-1970s, my employers transferred me from Kuwait to Algeria, a distance of several thousand miles, I had no difficulty, if I spoke in Gulf Arabic, in making myself understood to (and in understanding) ordinary Algerians in southern oasis towns such as Ourgla and Touggourt, even though most of them had never left Algeria in their lives: we were all speaking 'bedouin' dialects. But the Arabic of the city of Algiers, only a few hundred miles to the north, and where I was based, is of North African 'sedentary' type, and was so incomprehensible to me (as was my Gulf Arabic to the Algérois) that throughout my two-year residence there I found it easier to speak French. This discontinuous 'patchwork quilt' patterning of 'bedouin' and 'sedentary' dialects is now being eroded by dialect contact brought about by the expansion of the cities and new patterns of work and residence. Nonetheless, these original and ancient typological differences remain a feature of the sociolinguistic landscape of the Arabic-speaking world, even if in some locations they have historically undergone social re-interpretation, and continue to do so (see §1.8).

## 1.6 DIALECT CHANGE, LARGE-SCALE AND SMALL-SCALE

The modern Arabic dialects stand at the end point of thirteen centuries of evolution in the dialects which migrating Arabs, beginning in the mid-seventh century, took with them to Spain, North Africa, Egypt, the Levant, Iraq, Iran, and Central Asia. Since that remote period and in that vast area, migrations, wars, invasions, colonial settlements, and other upheavals have often been the cause of 'macro' dialectal change. Two well-known medieval cases are the expulsion of the trouble-making Banī Hilāl and Banī Sulaym tribes from Egypt to the Maghreb by the Fāṭimid Caliphate in the eleventh century, and the devastation and depopulation of Baghdad wrought by the invasion of the Mongols in February 1258, followed by a second episode of destruction at the hands of Tamerlane in 1400–1. These events had profound effects on the dialect geography of North Africa and Iraq respectively, the results of which we still see today. The Bani Hilāl migration transplanted into the Maghreb the 'bedouin' dialect type, quite different from the 'pre-Hilālī' 'sedentary' dialects brought there and to Spain by the first Arab armies two to three centuries earlier. These bedouin, whose migration continued intermittently over about a century, gradually spread their dialects throughout the North African countryside and also eventually influenced the dialects of neighbouring towns, in a process known as 'bedouinization'. In Iraq, the mass slaughter of the Muslim population of Baghdad (the Christians and Jews were largely spared) left a depopulated city which was gradually refilled over the next five centuries by in-comers, the majority of whom were Muslims and spoke dialects 'bedouin' in character and different from those of the original Muslim population who, like the Baghdadi Christians and Jews, had spoken a 'sedentary' *qaltu*-type dialect, as they still do in the north of Iraq today (Blanc 1964: 168–71). The long-term result for Baghdad was the creation of a new communal indexicalization of dialect-type, Muslim v.

Christian/Jewish; a minor one, Christian v. Jewish, continued the pre-1258 situation. These are just two of the many examples one could cite of ‘macro’ language change triggered by *force majeure*.

Turning now to less dramatic causes of language change: gradual, accretive urbanization and the contact phenomena associated with it have been a main driver. Among studies of urbanization and its effects, we note the work of Enam Al-Wer on Amman, now a city of several million which was no more than a village as recently as the 1930s, but grew exponentially as a result of inward migration, much of it Palestinian in the aftermath of the wars with Israel of 1948 and 1967. In Amman, a process of levelling has occurred which is resulting in entirely novel forms, such as the ‘compromise’ focussing of the 2 com pl enclitic pronoun *-kum*, which is now replacing original *-ku* (typical of the Jordanian ‘input’ dialects) and original *-kon* (typical of Palestinian ‘input’ dialects) as the default Ammani form in the speech of the younger generations. This *-kum* is an ethnically neutral adopted form (possibly borrowed from MSA) and forms part of an embryonic new linguistic identity for the city (Al-Wer 2007: 70–3). Something similar occurred on a smaller scale in the Iraqi town of Hīt (Khan, this volume): the Arabic dialect of the Karaite Jews of that town developed novel forms, apparently as a result of local bedouin influence. All the Jewish dialects of Iraq have *q* as a reflex of OA\*/q/ and *-tu* as the 1sng s-stem form, thus all typically have ‘sedentary’ *qaltu* ‘I said’. But the Karaite Jews of Hīt innovated the form *qilit*, a compromise based on the Iraqi ‘bedouin’ *gilit* but with ‘Karaite’ *q* for *g*. Khan attributes the motivation for this innovation to the openness of this particular Karaite community to assimilation into the surrounding culture, as shown, for example, by their use of the Arabic script in many of their writings. Other Iraqi Jewish dialects, spoken by socially less open and inclusive Jewish communities, did not develop such hybrid forms.

## 1.7 TYPES OF INTERNAL LINGUISTIC CHANGE

The processes of historical change which affected the morphosyntax of Arabic dialects as a whole fall into several categories, some of them already exemplified in the Middle/Mixed Arabic materials that have been discussed:

- the grammaticalization of lexical items to create invariant particles or clitic morphemes to express grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, and modality. These were in many cases transparently derived from common core dialectal verbs such as *kān* ‘to be’, *ʿamal* ‘to work’, *qaʿad* ‘to sit’, *rāḥ* ‘to go’. The origin of other particles, however, is more obscure and disputed, e.g. the so-called *b*-prefix on p-stem verbs, which has multiple semantic/pragmatic values and occurs over a vast area (see Owens, Lentin, this volume).
- increased use of clitics and particles in general, e.g. genitive particles which differ from one region to another, e.g. *btāʿ*, *tabāʿ*, *mtāʿ*, *dyāl*, *māl*, *ḥagg*, etc. in an ‘analytic’ noun-phrase structure to express possession and other semantic relationships originally expressed by an annexation structure; loss of the apophonic

passive and its replacement with a system of prefixes/infixes such as *in-* and *it-*, e.g. *inxalaq* ‘it/he was created, born’ instead of *xuliq/ xiliq, itqaddam* ‘it/he was presented’ instead of *quddim*.

- simplification and analogical reduction resulting in greater paradigm symmetry, e.g. the loss of the dual and fpl as separate categories of the verb, both replaced by the mpl; reduction in the number of verb conjugations via analogical merger, so, e.g. *garēt* ‘I read’, *habbēt* ‘I loved’, *xallēt* ‘I allowed’, and even (in some Iraqi and Gulf dialects) *gālēt* ‘I said’, *širbēt* ‘I drank’, and *tzawwiġēt* ‘I married’, whereby several different s-stem verb paradigms were collapsed into one before consonant-initial personal inflections; the reshaping of the p-stem verb conjugation in the Maghrebi dialects so that there is greater symmetry in the expression of person and plurality, e.g. in Morocco: 1sng *n...*, 1pl *n... u*, 2msng *t...*, 2fsng *t... i*, 2 com pl *t... u*, 3msng *y...*, 3fsng *t...*, 3 com pl *y... u*.

Processes such as these are typically triggered by long-term contact and dialect mixing, especially in cosmopolitan urban milieus with a history of continuous inward migration (e.g. Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, Casablanca). ‘Bedouin’-type dialects, on the other hand, which existed until recent times in relative isolation from external influences, have been less susceptible to them, and slower to develop a more ‘analytic’ morphosyntax, though this is now changing (Ingham 1994a: 109; Holes 2004a: 123–5).

## 1.8 INDEXICALIZATION

A widespread sociolinguistic phenomenon in the Arabic-speaking world, touched on already, is the ‘indexicalization’ of dialectal forms, whereby differences which were originally geographical can acquire a new communal marking, often religious. We look here at a couple of examples.

We have already noted the case of Baghdad, where what was probably historically a minor degree of communal dialect differentiation became a major one because of the knock-on effects of the cataclysm of 1258: a large influx of new inhabitants who spoke a different (‘bedouin’) type of dialect, and whose speakers happened to be Muslims. An analogous process occurred in Bahrain following the arrival there in the mid-eighteenth century of the Āl Khalifa and their bedouin tribal allies, all of them of central Arabian origin and confessionally Sunnī. The already existing major population element in the islands was the Baḥārna, that is, an indigenous Arabic-speaking ‘Twelver’ Shīʿa community, whose dialects were different from those of central Arabia. After the Āl Khalifa arrived, the new reality in Bahrain was of two separate communities divided along sectarian lines. From the start, there was no social integration between them: they lived in different settlements, did not intermarry, and pursued different life-styles. Over time, dialect differences—geographical in origin, as was the case in Baghdad—came to be seen as one of the most salient markers of this social fragmentation, and became so labelled: it eventually became possible to speak of the *Sunnī* and *Shīʿī* dialects of Bahrain. By no later than the mid-1970s and almost certainly for many decades before, the ‘Sunnī’ dialect had become

dominant despite its speakers being numerically inferior, a fact which was beginning to be reflected in the shift of the socially marginalized Shīʿa away from saliently ‘Shīʿī’ dialectal forms (for details see Holes 1983b, 1986a, 1987). This shift was shown to have become even more pronounced in research done thirty years later (al-Qouz 2009).

It is important to note that some of the same variables which in Bahrain became sociolinguistic markers of sectarian affiliation have no such significance in nearby Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE. Historically, the latter states underwent many of the same language changes as did Bahrain, but in them the resulting forms were not indexicalized as they were in Bahrain, because of their different demographic make-up. So, for example, the /y/ reflex of etymological *ġim* in, e.g. *iyi* ‘he goes’, *yār* ‘neighbour’, *daray* ‘step ladder’, which became a marker of the ‘Sunni’ dialect in Bahrain, as opposed to ‘Shīʿī’ /ġ/ (Holes 1983b, 1986a) had and has no such socially distinctive value in Kuwait, Qatar, or the UAE, even though both variants existed and still exist there too. Thus the ‘same’ variants, though they were produced by one historical process, viz. the palatalization of historical /ġ/, and probably in the same time period, later acquired quite different local social values.

A striking example of on-going indexicalization has recently been reported for the Christian population of the town of as-Salt in northern Jordan (Al-Wer, Horesh, Herin, and Fanis 2015). It too is concerned with social marginalization but here the linguistic effects go in the opposite direction to the Bahraini case. On each of the four variables in question, the Saltī dialect shows pairs of variants, one set of which is historically linked with the dialect of nearby Ḥōrān (as described in Cantineau 1946) and the other set of which is a recent (Palestinian) innovation. It turns out that Saltī Christians were more likely to use the older Ḥōrānī variants than the innovating ones, compared to the more innovating Saltī Muslims, a finding which Al-Wer et al. interpret as an indirect reflection of the decreasing homogeneity of Jordanian society because of increased inward migration. This has affected both Christians and Muslims, but the Christians, already a tiny minority (6%) in Jordan, feel even further marginalized by the new migrant influxes, which is why, Al-Wer et al. argue, they cling on more tenaciously to the variants associated with a traditional Jordanian identity. Thus it appears that a new stratification of these variants along religious lines, which did not exist thirty or forty years ago, is now under way.

These examples of indexicalization in Arabic-speaking communities bring us to a more general consideration of those factors which typically create and maintain, and those which typically erode, the connection between dialect and social identity. The work of Lesley Milroy on dialect loyalty in working-class Belfast (Milroy 1987) is pertinent here. Where residence, occupation, faith-group, and family coincide to provide the matrix within which interaction normally takes place, linguistic fault lines are likely to develop which run parallel to social ones. In research on the speech of three neighbourhoods of working-class Belfast Catholics and Protestants, carried out in the 1970s and 1980s, Milroy showed that the degree to which non-standard features of Belfast English were subject to ‘correction’ in the direction of standard English was directly correlated with the ‘density’ of the speaker’s ‘social network’, as measured on a scale from one to five. A ‘closed’ or ‘dense’ network is one in which the

people an individual associates with and talks to on a regular basis are all known to one another. This tends to have a reinforcing effect on the values and behaviour of the group as a whole, including their speech. Such networks are described as 'multiplex', meaning that the relations between pairs of individuals within them may exist at a number of levels, so that, for example, a person may have an uncle who is also his local greengrocer, plays in the same pub darts team, and attends the same church. An 'open' network, by contrast, is one where an individual's contacts tend not to know one another, and the relationships within them are 'uniplex'; that is, one individual does not have multiple identities in relation to any other individual. Milroy showed that 'open' networks lead to the abandonment of local features of speech, whereas 'closed' or 'dense' networks are associated with their maintenance.

Milroy's work on Belfast can give us an explanation of how 'dialect loyalty' is maintained in Arabic speech communities. Religious practice focussed on the local mosque, or church, residential segregation, endogamous marriage, and different patterns of employment have all been characteristic of Arab faith-based communities for centuries. Taken together, this matrix of factors is liable to produce and maintain 'closed' social networks and in turn the evolution of community-specific speech norms which the studies by Blanc (for Baghdad), Holes (for Bahrain) and Al-Wer et al. (for as-Salt) observed. Changes in the strength of this social matrix over time have the opposite effect, tending to weaken loyalty to communal norms. As urbanization and modern employment and residence patterns (new housing estates, nuclear family houses) take hold and extended family and local social structures break down, modern 'uniplex' networks gradually become dominant, especially among the younger generations. Moreover, to the extent that speakers begin to feel a need to project themselves, on occasion, as members of a community superordinate to their own, they may consciously begin to change their communal speech norms. Such a process seems to have occurred in Baghdad, where what remains of the original Christian community (many have emigrated to the USA, especially in the last three or four decades) has long been 'bi-dialectal', reserving Christian Baghdadi for interactions with co-religionists and in the domestic environment, but routinely switching to Muslim Baghdadi in public and inter-confessional contexts. This is indicative of a tacit recognition that Muslim Baghdadi has become the *de facto* dominant dialect and acquired a status greater than that of merely one of a competing number of 'communal dialects'.

## 1.9 PIDGINIZATION AND CREOLIZATION

We noted earlier that in many of the lands the Arabs conquered, before Arabic took over completely, there must have been a prolonged period of bi- or multilingualism, which in a few areas still survives in a vestigial form: (neo)-Aramaic-Arabic in parts of Iraq and Syria, Berber-Arabic in large areas of Morocco and Algeria, and still in a small way in Mauritania. In Egypt, Coptic survived in pockets as a domestic vernacular language alongside Arabic in Middle Egypt until possibly the seventeenth century.



Pace the theory of Versteegh (1984) mentioned earlier, full-blown pidginization and creolization (Tosco and Manfredi 2013) seems to have been rare in the history of Arabic, attested with certainty only in a couple of cases: in the Arabic of Juba, south Sudan (Smith and Ama 2005; Miller 2007; Manfredi and Petrollino 2013), in the related Ki-Nubi language of Kenya and Uganda (Heine 1982; Wellens 2005), and in the Arabic pidgin spoken by South Asian labourers in the modern Gulf States (Smart 1990; Naess 2008). Why have pidginization and creolization been so rare? Permanent settlement and long-term integration with the indigenous population, including the conversion of the latter to Islam, seems to have been the pattern in most of the conquered territories from the first migrations of the eighth century. Arabic was learnt as a second language directly from its resident native speakers, who were from the start neighbours, co-religionists, and marriage partners. It is no coincidence that the examples we do have of Arabic pidginization/creolization are in East Africa, where the contact of Arabic native speakers was with ever-changing groups of speakers of indigenous languages in circumscribed settings. In Juba, a pidgin based on Egyptian spoken Arabic arose originally in military camps<sup>32</sup> after southern Sudan was annexed by the Turkish–Egyptian government in 1820. It developed over about fifty years into an urban pidgin/creole and then an interethnic lingua franca in the multilingual Equatorial Province of southern Sudan (Miller 2007: 517–18). In the modern Gulf, a semi-permanent, poorly educated, rotating, and largely South Asian labour force, the men usually housed in camps, has been employed since the oil boom of the 1970s in construction, cleaning, cooking, gardening, and other menial tasks, which has brought it into contact with native speakers of Gulf Arabic in a predictable and limited set of communication contexts. Unlike earlier generations of Indian white-collar workers and technicians employed by the British in the Gulf, these manual labourers know no English. A Gulf Arabic-based pidgin has been the result, whose basic structures seem to be common to the whole Gulf region (Naess 2008). This relative structural regularity is probably a consequence of the fact that because its speakers have different mother tongues, the pidgin has acted as a lingua franca between them as well as a means of communication with their hosts: constant interaction between them over about forty years has helped to establish it. Nonetheless, compared to Juba Arabic or Ki-Nubi, which are much older, Gulf Pidgin Arabic is still much less standardized.

## 1.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study of the Arabic dialects has made great strides over the last half-century. While the descriptive tradition first established by French and German scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has continued, modern researchers have been increasingly concerned with tracing dialect history and explaining the

<sup>32</sup> It was known as *Bimbashi* Arabic, *binbaşı* (lit. ‘head of a thousand (men)’) being the Ottoman Turkish military equivalent to ‘lieutenant colonel’.



social dimensions of Arabic language change in terms of modern linguistic theory. The fruits of this modern revival of interest are there for all to see in publications like the *Wortatlas der arabischen Dialekte*, of which three of the four massive volumes have now been published, the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, and the *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik*, which began publication in 1978 and is now, in late 2017, at volume 66. In both these latter publications a high proportion of the articles are concerned with the Arabic dialects. Yet despite this, Arabic, and in particular the Arabic dialects, remain ‘on the outside looking in’ when it comes to their profile in general linguistics journals. In part, the blame for this low visibility can be laid at the door of Arabic linguists themselves for their failure to use Arabic data to test and critique current theoretical models. Many of them would counter, however, that current linguistic model-building is simply too theory-driven, too abstract, and too distant from their interests to justify the expenditure of time.

This introductory chapter has touched on a number of topics specific to Arabic language history as well as others which have a more general relevance and apply to Arabic as they do to other languages. I hope that it will help both non-Arabist linguists and Classical Arabists without a knowledge of the dialects to get an understanding of the history and evolution of Arabic as a vernacular spoken language, a topic on which relatively little has been written compared with the vast literature devoted to the history of Classical Arabic, whether as a language system or as the vehicle of a great literary culture (e.g. Fück 1950, 1955). While the focus of this book is squarely on the *linguistic* structure and aspects of the *socially driven* historical evolution of dialectal forms of Arabic, it is worth noting that there is a whole other, subaltern, *literary* culture of dialectal poetry, shadow theatre, and story-telling, which is largely ignored by Arab literary elites and most western Arabists (see Ferrando, this volume, for an exception). Like the absence of studies of Arabic in the linguistics literature, this is a pity, as the Classical and non-Classical forms of the language and their literatures have historically always had close ties, the full complexity of which can be revealed only if both are subjected to sustained critical examination. After all, as the Arabs themselves say: *kulluh ‘arabiyy* ‘It’s all Arabic!’

# The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic

JORDI AGUADÉ

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the western dialects of Arabic, which are spoken in an area that stretches roughly from the African Atlantic shore in the west to Libya in the east and from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the Sahel and the Senegal River in the south. Today this area includes the modern states of Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya (Maps 2.1–2.3). To the western dialectal group belong the North African dialects, Maltese—the language spoken in the island of Malta—as well as two extinct dialects, namely Andalusian and Siculo-Arabic.

In comparison with the Middle East, especially the Fertile Crescent, the North African region is characterized by religious homogeneity. Christianity disappeared shortly after the Islamic conquest, and since the Middle Ages, Jews have been the only non-Islamic community.<sup>1</sup> In the eighth and ninth centuries Khārijism played an important role within the Islamic community, but Sunnism took over and nowadays only a small number of non-Sunni communities survive (Ibāḍīs in Djerba, Tunisia, as well as in Ouargla, and the Mzāb in Algeria). The predominant legal school is the Mālikī, especially in Morocco and Algeria.<sup>2</sup>

Even from a linguistic point of view, the Maghreb is a much more homogenous region than the Middle East. In the Maghreb the Arabic dialects show the influence of only two substrata, Berber and a Late Latin Romance, the latter being spoken until the Middle Ages in some North African towns and villages. The question of whether Punic was still being spoken when the Arabs arrived in North Africa has been a controversial one for several decades. French authors (Gsell, Gauthier and Gauthier) claim that Punic survived, chiefly in some rural areas of Tunisia. According to this hypothesis, Arabization was favoured by the fact that such populations spoke not

<sup>1</sup> Today, only small Jewish communities still survive in Morocco and Tunisia (about 1,500 souls in Tunisia and 4,000 in Morocco).

<sup>2</sup> In Tunisia, Mālikism is also predominant, but the Ḥanafī School (brought by the Ottomans) also has followers.



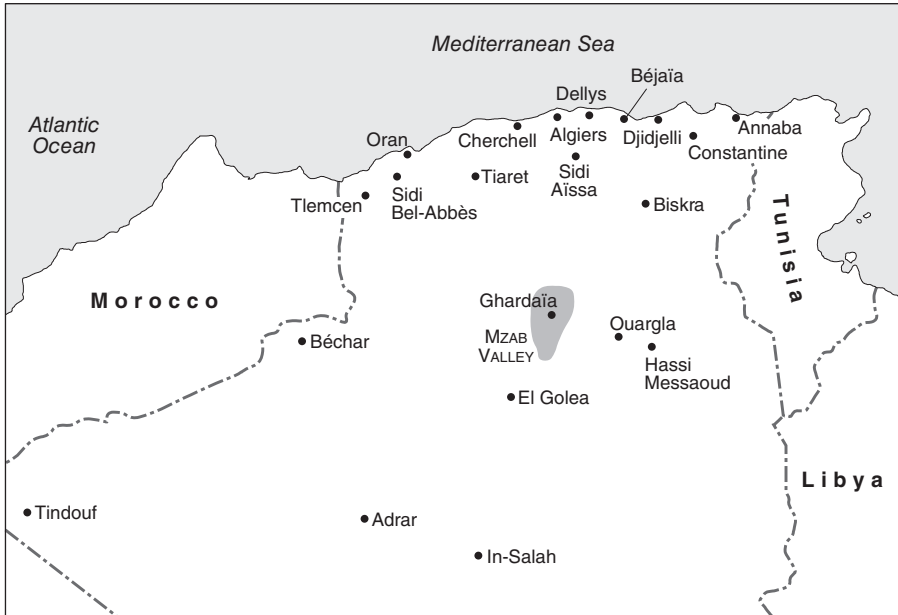
MAP 2.1 Morocco

Berber but Punic, a Semitic language like Arabic. Modern research rejects this assumption<sup>3</sup> and it now seems undeniable that Punic played no role in the Arabization process of North Africa. At present the only vernaculars besides Arabic are Berber dialects, especially in Morocco and Algeria.<sup>4</sup>

As for the number of Berber-speakers in the region, we have reliable data only for Morocco: according to the 2014 Moroccan census, 26.7% of the population speak a Berber dialect, distributed as follows: Tashelhit 15%, Tamazight 7.6%, Tarifit 4.1%, in

<sup>3</sup> Against the 'Punic hypothesis' it has been claimed that in Late Latin sources the term *punicus* means nothing more than 'local, indigenous' (in opposition to 'Latin, Roman'). But the main argument against this hypothesis is that no traces of this alleged Punic substrate can be found in dialects spoken in this region. Cf. Marçais 1961: 175; Courtois 1950; Chaker 1989.

<sup>4</sup> In some southern oases we can find other (very minor) languages such as Azer (in Walata, Mauritania, of Soninké origin, now extinct) or Korandjé in Tabelbala (in Algeria, a language belonging to the Songhay group). In Libya there is a minority of about 2,600 Toubou speakers in the Kufra area (Pereira 2007: 56).



MAP 2.2 Algeria



MAP 2.3 Tunisia

a population of 33.8 million.<sup>5</sup> For Algeria (population 39.5 million) Grand'Henry (2006: 56) estimates a percentage of 25% of Berberophones. In Mauritania, a country with 3.5 million inhabitants, Zenāga (the local Berber variety) is almost extinct, with approximately 5,000 speakers. Cf. Ould Cheikh 2010: 4752. As for Tunisia (population 10.9 million), Baccouche (2009: 572) estimates the number of Berber speakers to be 26,000. Regarding Libya (population 5.6 million in 2006), Pereira puts the percentage of Berberophones at 14% (Pereira 2007: 56).

## 2.2 SOURCES

In comparison to the Middle East or Egypt, historical sources for North Africa are not only scarce but also very often late, and give us little direct information concerning the Arab settlement and urban development of the region. Data about the early linguistic situation in the Maghreb are conspicuous by their absence, and in the case of the first centuries of Islamic Morocco we know next to nothing. Geographical sources such as Al-Ya<sup>c</sup>qūbī,<sup>6</sup> Al-Bakrī,<sup>7</sup> and Al-ʿIdrīsī<sup>8</sup> occasionally give us some information concerning the settlement of Arab tribes and the languages spoken in Maghrebi towns.

The majority of the European sources (mainly in French, Spanish, English, and Portuguese) in which we can find some data concerning North African dialects, were written quite late—after the sixteenth century—and are of very different types and value, since they include accounts of captives, narratives of travellers, as well as reports from diplomats or clerics sent to the Maghreb to rescue Christian prisoners. The most important European source is the *Descrittione dell’Africa* (‘Description of Africa’) written in the sixteenth century by the Moroccan (of Andalusian origin) al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Wazzānī, better known as Leo Africanus. Data contained in his book are of special relevance since its author travelled across North Africa on various diplomatic missions and visited southern Morocco, Timbuktu, Algeria, Tunis, Libya, and Egypt. Concerning the description and history of North Africa, Leo Africanus is one of the sources for the Spanish captive Luis del Mármol, who wrote *Descripción general de África* (printed 1573–99). In this volume the author provides detailed information about the manners and customs of the Moroccans, and also includes transcriptions of certain words.<sup>9</sup> The Frenchman Germain Moüette spent eleven years as a captive, mainly in the town of Meknes. In his

<sup>5</sup> Cf. [http://rgph2014.hcp.ma/Presentation-des-principaux-resultats-du-RGPH-2014\\_a374.html](http://rgph2014.hcp.ma/Presentation-des-principaux-resultats-du-RGPH-2014_a374.html). According to the census of 2004, a percentage of 28.2% spoke Berber (distributed as follows: Tashelhit 14.6%, Tamazight 8.8%, Tarifit 4.8%, in a population of 29.6 million).

<sup>6</sup> Geographer born in Baghdad. He wrote his *Kitāb al-Buldān* in Egypt in AD 891.

<sup>7</sup> The Andalusian geographer Abū ʿUbayd al-Bakrī (d. 1094), author of the *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik*.

<sup>8</sup> Known as ash-Sharīf al-ʿIdrīsī (native of Ceuta, d. probably 1165). He is the author of the *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq*, a geographical work written for the Norman king of Sicily, Roger II.

<sup>9</sup> Mármol spent almost nine years in Morocco. He engaged in some important travels with the entourage of the sultan.

*Relation* (printed 1683) he also transcribes some Moroccan words and phrases and includes at the end an interesting French–Moroccan glossary.

## 2.3 GENERAL FEATURES AND CLASSIFICATION

There are two hallmarks shared by all Maghrebi dialects: the prefix *n-* for the 1sng of the *p*-stem (= *nəktəb* ‘I write/will write’) and a vowel-system characterized by a tendency to elide all short vowels in open syllable (Versteegh 1997: 164–9).

Maghrebi dialects have sometimes been dubbed ‘colonial Arabic’, i.e. as belonging to a type which shows less variation than the dialects of the homeland. For instance, there is only one basic variant for the 1sng *s*-stem, *ktabt/ ktəbt* ‘I wrote’, compared with *katabt / ktəbt / katabtu* in the dialects of the eastern Arab World (or even *katabk / katubk / katbuk* in the Yemen (Behnstedt 1985: 117)). Diachronically, they belong to the so-called Zone II type, i.e. to the territories (Mesopotamia, Egypt, etc.) Arabicized by speakers of dialects of the Arabian Peninsula (Zone I) from where the Arab expansion began. Maghrebi dialects are diachronically divided into two types (Durand 2009: 178–85): pre-Hilālī and Hilālī, depending on whether they go back to the first or the second wave of Arabization of North Africa (on the Banū Hilāl see §2.5.3). Pre-Hilālī dialects are typologically sedentary and are found mainly in the ancient towns of the Maghreb (Tunis, Cherchell, Fes, Tetouan) and in some rural areas, such as Jbāla in northern Morocco. All Jewish dialects, from Libya to Morocco, belong to this type. A hallmark of all pre-Hilālī dialects is the voiceless realization of \*q (as *q*, *k* or *ʔ*).

To the pre-Hilālī group belong two extinct dialects—Siculo- and Andalusī Arabic—as well as Maltese, which is the only Arabic dialect to have become the official language of a nation state. To the Hilālī group belong all the ‘bedouin’ dialects of the Maghreb, such as Ḥassāniyya (in Mauritania and southern Morocco), Zʿīr (in Morocco), those of Algeria, Maṛāzīg (southern Tunisia), and the dialects of Libya. The most salient distinctive feature of these dialects is the voiced realization of \*q as *g* and the preservation of the interdental fricative series of consonants (*t̪*, *d̪*, *ḏ̪*).

Dialects belonging to the Hilālī group untouched by external influences are not very numerous nowadays and are mainly found in those regions where ‘sedentary’ dialects are absent, such as Mauritania or in most of Libya. In Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia there exists a third group, the ‘mixed dialects’, i.e. dialects of Hilālī origin, which have lost several of their characteristic features because of contact with ‘sedentary’ dialects. Population shifts, the establishment of new towns, as well as immigration, are salient factors that have caused these mixed dialects to emerge. Two examples are those found in Marrakech and Casablanca. Marrakech was founded by the Almoravids in 1062 and became the capital of this dynasty and of their successors, the Almohads;<sup>10</sup> Casablanca was a small village which began to

<sup>10</sup> According to some sources, the town was founded in the year 1060 or 1078 (Sánchez 2014: 18). Berber was the first language of the town, and Arabic came later, with the Banū Hilāl tribes (Rḥāmma, Ūḏāya) and probably under Almohad rule. On the mixed character of its dialect cf. Sánchez 2014: 460–1.

grow at the end of the nineteenth century (Aguadé 2005). In both cases their dialects are clearly of Hilālī origin but have lost the interdental consonants and introduced typically ‘sedentary’ features such as analytic genitive markers and prefixed verbal modifiers.

For the diachronic study of the Maghrebi dialects Maltese is an important source as *terminus comparationis* since the island of Malta was conquered by the Normans and annexed to the kingdom of Sicily in the year 1090. The question of whether Maltese goes back to the Arabic spoken by the Muslim conquerors in the year 870 or to Siculo Arabic introduced later (1048) by Sicilian immigrants is, for our purposes, irrelevant:<sup>11</sup> whichever is the case, Maltese represents an archaic pre-Hilālī dialect which evolved uncontaminated by later Hilālī interferences. Furthermore, it is also the only Arabic dialect spoken in a non-diglossic linguistic environment. To a minor degree, Andalusi Arabic also serves as a *terminus comparationis* which can help us to explain some linguistic developments.

## 2.4 SUBSTRATA

As has been mentioned, prior to the Islamic conquest, the main language of the region was Berber. An African Romance (evolved from Late Latin) was also spoken in urban areas. Since both languages, Berber and Late Latin, are well known, in principle it should not be difficult to locate examples of possible substrate influences in the Arabic dialects of the Maghreb. Unfortunately, however, matters are not as simple as that, especially concerning the impact of the Berber substrate, as will be explained.

### 2.4.1 LATIN

At the time of the arrival of the Arabs, Vulgar Latin, a kind of pre-Romance language, was widely spoken in North Africa, mainly in the coastal towns. Latin *per se* continued to be used as the language of administration (Molan 1978: 72–6; Lewicki 1951). Regarding morphology, the only case of Late Latin substrate influence seems to be the plural morphemes *-aš / -oš* common in dialects of northern Morocco, in particular in the area between Tangier, Chaouen, and Ceuta (Colin 1926: 65–8). These morphemes may be suffixed to Latin loanwords as well as to Arabic proper names and diminutives: *krābliwoš* ‘sieves’ (pl of *kərbāllō* < L. *cribellum*), *šwāriyyaš* ‘kinds of saddle bags’ (pl of *šwāri* < L. *saria*). According to Corriente, gender merging in the 2sng of the personal pronouns in some pre-Hilālī dialects of Morocco and Algeria (*nīna* or *nīn* ‘you (m and f)’) is due to the influence of the Latin substrate (Corriente 2013a: 142–3).

<sup>11</sup> According to Al-Ĥimyarī, the Arabs expelled all the inhabitants of Malta after they conquered it; the island was only repopulated in 1048 or 1049 (Vanhove 1994: 167; 1998: 97; Brincat 2008: 141–2).

Latin influence in North African Arabic dialects is obvious in the lexicon. Latin loans can be found in the names of the Julian calendar,<sup>12</sup> which is in use not only in the whole Maghreb but also in the Mashreq: *yinnāyər* ‘January’, *fəbrāyər* ‘February’, *mārṣ* ‘March’, *ibrīl* ‘April’, etc., all of them with many variants (WAD III: maps 427–38). Examples of Latin loanwords usual in the dialect of Tunis (Medina) are: *ṣbāroṣ* (< *sparus*) ‘gilt-head bream’, *furnāq* (< *fornāc*) ‘furnace of the *ḥammām*’, *ṣāqūr* (< *secūr*) ‘hatchet’ (Singer 1984: 121 and 129). Other lexical items of Latin origin are for instance:

- *babbūš* / *bubbūš* (and variants) ‘snail’ (< L. *babōsus*, Sp. *babosa* ‘slug’), very widespread: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, *bebbūx* (spelt so, but pronounced [bebbūš]) in Maltese (WAD I: 375, map 127; de Prémare 1: 136).
- In Morocco and Algeria we find: *ṭūbba* / *ṭōppa* / *ṭobba* / *ṭawba* / *ṭumba* (and other variants) ‘rat’ (< L. *talpa*)<sup>13</sup> (WAD I: 388, map 131).
- In Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya are: *fəllūs* ‘chick’ (< L. *pullus* through Berber *aḥfullus*), with *fellus* being employed in Maltese (WAD I: 136, map 107).

#### 2.4.2 BERBER

Concerning the influence and importance of a Berber substrate in Moroccan Arabic, scholars have expressed opposing views, ranging from a general assumption of Berber influence to a general denial (Diem 1979: 52–3)<sup>14</sup>. In recent years, Berber substrate influence has not lacked supporters, especially among Berber specialists<sup>15</sup>. As for Ḥassāniyya, Taine-Cheikh minimizes the impact of the Berber substrate<sup>16</sup>. A list of possible Berber influences on the Arabic dialects of North Africa is given by El Aissati (2006); however, the author mentions that in some of the quoted cases Berber influence is not certain<sup>17</sup>. Some features, often explained as resulting from substrate influence, could be the result of a general shift common to many Arabic dialects: for instance, the rules for the elision of short vowels in open syllables are in some cases quite similar in Moroccan and Syrian dialects. Substrate influence within Maghrebi dialects therefore needs re-examination in light of a comparative study with Levantine ones (see also §2.6.2.2).

A critical re-examination of some alleged cases of Berber substrate influence on Arabic dialects has been made by Maarten Kossmann (2013). For instance, he points out that the realization of [t] as assimilated [tʰ], generally seen as an obvious case of

<sup>12</sup> Solar calendar used mainly by peasants in farming.

<sup>13</sup> Fr. *taupe*, Sp. *topo* ‘mole’.

<sup>14</sup> Colin, for instance, considered the impact of Berber on Moroccan dialects to be minimal (Diem 1979: 55).

<sup>15</sup> Often based on dubious assumptions. For example, only an almost complete ignorance of Arabic dialects could lead Chtatou to assert that the loss of \*ʃ in Moroccan dialects is due to Berber substrate influence (Chtatou 1997: 107). Furthermore, the author seems not to know that in some ‘sedentary’ dialects (Fes, Chaouen, Jewish dialects, etc.) the phoneme ʃ is very common as a result of the shift \*q > ʃ.

<sup>16</sup> ‘The Berber substrate does not seem to have had a large influence on the structure of [Ḥassāniyya] Arabic’ (Taine-Cheikh 2007: 240).

<sup>17</sup> A methodological handicap of some research published by Berber specialists is that their conclusions are based on data from a single Berber dialect and a single Arabic dialect.



Berber influence, could alternatively be seen as a Late Latin influence, since this shift is absent from Tashelhit, Touareg, and Libyan Berber dialects<sup>18</sup>. Berber substrate influence is, however, more evident in the following cases:

- Changes in number: *māʔ* ‘water’ is sng in CLA (and in the majority of the Arabic dialects), but in some north Moroccan and Algerian dialects *ma* is pl because *aman* ‘water’ in Berber is pl, e.g. *l-ma bārdīn* ‘the water is cold’ (in Anjra, instead of *l-ma bārād* cf. Vicente 2000: 121, for Algeria cf. Marçais 1956: 340–1).
- Changes in gender: *ṣūf* ‘wool’, *lḥam* ‘meat’, *ʕsāl* ‘honey’ are f in some Moroccan and Algerian dialects because in Berber all these substantives are f (Marçais 1977: 154). For the same reason in Djidjelli *rẓāl* ‘leg’ is m (and not f as in most varieties of Arabic; Marçais 1956: 335).
- Comparative sentences with the prep *ʕla* instead of *mən*: *t-tālẓ byəḍ ʕla ẓ-ṣūf* ‘snow is whiter than wool’. This construction, very common in all Maghrebi Arabic dialects, is a calque from Berber: Tashelhit *tifiyi tərwa f-uḡrum* ‘meat is better than bread’ (the prep *f-* means ‘on, above’, like Arabic *ʕla*: Aguadé and Vicente, 1997: 234).
- A pattern {*tā...t*} for names of professions or personal characteristics is borrowed from Berber: *tābannāyt* ‘masonry’, *tānəẓẓārt* ‘carpentry’, *tādərrīt* ‘childishness’, *tāʕazrīt* ‘celibacy’ (Harrell 1962: 88–9, Caubet 2008: 279).
- The shift *l > n* in some dialects in southern Morocco: *nxən* (< *nxəl*) ‘palm tree’, *tā-ngūnu* (< *tā-ngūlu*) ‘we say’, *wənnə* (< *wəllə*) ‘or’ (examples from Īgli, Behnstedt 2004: 49 and text 59).
- The use of *ṛāṣ* ‘head’ (instead of *nəfs* ‘self’) for the reflexive pron (Aguadé 1996a: 208, El Aissati 2006: 297).

As regards other alleged cases of Berber substrate influence and Berber loanwords in the Arabic dialects of the Maghreb see §2.6.2.2 and §2.10.1.

## 2.5 THE ARABIZATION OF THE MAGHREB

As already noted, little is known about the linguistic situation in the Maghreb prior to the arrival of the Arabs. In Morocco, Berber was the mother tongue of the majority of the population and in the north (in former Mauretania Tingitana) a Romance language was also spoken in some major urban centres such as Tangier, Ceuta, Salé, Volubilis, etc. The situation was similar in Algeria and Tunisia, where Late Latin was spoken in the most important towns, mainly on the coast, with the hinterland being entirely Berberophone. Arabic was first introduced into North Africa by the Muslim conquerors of the seventh century. The first raid against the Byzantines in Tunisia took place in the year 647; Carthage was conquered in 698 and, only thirteen years later, in 711, Arab armies reached northern Morocco and crossed the Straits of

<sup>18</sup> Kossmann 2013: 179 and n. 6: ‘One remarks the gross overlap between the extent of spirantization in Berber and the realm of the Roman Empire in northern Africa. As the weakening of stops (esp. voiced stops) is a well-known feature of Vulgar Latin, this may not be coincidental’.

Gibraltar to begin their conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. However, all available data show that this first wave of Arabization was quite superficial and most probably restricted to the main towns (especially those founded by the conquerors) and their outskirts (Holes 2004a: 33–4).

At first, the process of Arabization was probably favoured by the structural similarities between Berber, a Hamito-Semitic language, and Arabic<sup>19</sup>. However, the Arabization process in North Africa was never completed and in large areas, particularly in Algeria and Morocco, the Berber language has successfully resisted Arabization until today. Some non-linguistic factors played a decisive role in this context,<sup>20</sup> first and foremost topography: Arabization was more successful on the plains than in the isolated and inaccessible mountainous areas, which generally—even until the twentieth century—escaped control and influence from central power. Demography was another key influence. Berber-speaking regions with a high population density, and a sedentary and mainly agricultural lifestyle, were better equipped to resist linguistic assimilation: the contrary was the case in areas with nomadic or semi-nomadic inhabitants and with a thin population.<sup>21</sup> Finally, social structures also played an important role. This influence worked in both directions, that is, for and against Arabization: Berbers (particularly in rural areas) as well as Arabs both belonged to segmentary societies based on lineage which are characterized by strong internal cohesion. In this respect, tribal alliances between Berber and Arab tribes made linguistic assimilation easier. Colin suggests that another factor that might have contributed to the Arabization of northern Morocco was the participation of important contingents of Jbāla Berber tribes in the *ġihād* against Christians in al-Andalus. On returning home they had been Arabicized through contact with Arabic-speaking Andalusians (Colin 1986: 1203). On the other hand, the Andalusian refugees expelled from Cordoba who came to Fes as a result of the ‘rising of the suburbs’ in the year 818 and who are frequently mentioned as an important factor in the Arabization of the town, can hardly have played a significant role in that respect (as Colin and other scholars who follow his lead assume (Colin 1986: 1203)): it is doubtful whether the majority of them spoke fluent Arabic, considering that only a century had elapsed since the arrival of the Arabs in the Iberian Peninsula in 711.

The Arabization process, no doubt, was always favoured by the fact that Arabic is the language of the Qurʾān and hence enjoyed great prestige among the Muslim population (Chaker 1989). In this context, it would be a mistake to ignore the influential role played by small religious teaching centres across the Maghreb. Not only did famous institutions like the *madrasa*-s of Kairouan (Qayrawān) and Fes contribute to the Arabization of North Africa, but teaching centres owned by *ṭariqa*-s in small towns, as was the case in Chinguetti (Shinqiṭṭ) in Mauritania or Tāmgrūt (Draa Valley, south of Zagora, Morocco), also provided rich libraries which helped to

<sup>19</sup> The shift from Berber to Arabic was thus likely to have been easier than it was from Berber to Latin in Roman times: see Chaker 1989.

<sup>20</sup> See a résumé in Chaker 1989 (with further bibliography).

<sup>21</sup> In Ibāḍi areas, such as the Mzāb in Algeria, the strong affiliation to this minority creed favoured the preservation of the associated Berber language.

attract scholars from the whole Maghreb and the Sahel. In Morocco, for instance, until the middle of the twentieth century a small rural teaching centre like the *zāwya* of Tamnūgalt (in the Draa Valley) was an important local *madrassa* which attracted pupils from all over southern Morocco and thus contributed to spreading knowledge of CLA in the region.

### 2.5.1 TUNISIA: KAIROUAN (QAYRAWĀN)

With regard to the linguistic situation in the region prior to the arrival of the Banū Hilāl we find some information in the Arabic sources. In his *Kitāb al-Buldān*, the Arabic geographer Al-Yaʿqūbī (second half of the third/ninth century) gives us details about the population of various Tunisian towns. The data contained in his book are especially precious because it is a very early source and its author visited the regions he describes personally.<sup>22</sup> According to Al-Yaʿqūbī, in his lifetime the population of Tunisia was composed of four main elements: Arabs, Berbers, the so-called *Afāriqa* (sng *Ifriqī*) (the Latin-speaking indigenous population living mainly in traditional towns), as well as the *Rūm* (the Greek-speaking community, descendants of former Byzantine soldiers and colonists in some towns) Cf. Marçais 1913: 45–8; Baccouche 2000: 65. For his part, Al-Bakrī mentions that in the eleventh century the town of Qābis (Gabès) was inhabited by Arabs and *Afāriqa* (Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 665). For the twelfth century the geographer Al-ʿIdrīsī (a native of Ceuta) mentions that in Qafṣa (Gafsa) the majority of its inhabitants still spoke African Latin (Al-ʿIdrīsī 1866: 122; Marçais 1913: 47; Marçais 1961: 176).

Concerning the territories of modern Algeria and Morocco, Al-Yaʿqūbī's data are unfortunately scarcer and less precise, but it can be postulated that in the main towns like Constantine, Tlemcen, and Tangiers the situation was quite similar. Al-Yaʿqūbī does not mention the existence of *Afāriqa* in Morocco, in spite of the fact that Ceuta and Tangiers probably had at that time a Latin-speaking population. He tells us that the inhabitants of Kairouan (Qayrawān) were mixed, being made up of several ethnic groups: Arabs from different north and south Arabian tribes (Quraysh, Muḍar, Rabīʿa, Qaḥṭān), Berbers, *Rūm*, as well as people from Iran (Marçais 1941: 48–50). According to this author, emigration to Ifriqiyā was encouraged by the ʿAbbāsīd authorities in Baghdad (Marçais 1961: 177).

As its name implies, the town of Qayrawān was founded as a garrison camp (*qayrawān*; cf. Dozy 1881 2: 431; Marçais 1961: 178) by ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ in the year 670, probably on the remains of an abandoned Roman or Byzantine settlement in a Berber-speaking region.<sup>23</sup> During its first two centuries of existence, Qayrawān was seriously threatened by attacks from Khārijite Berbers and rebel military leaders. In the years 684–9, for instance, the town was occupied by the Khārijite rebel Kusayla and in 757–8 the Khārijites massacred its Arab elite (mainly of Qurayshite origin). Under the Aghlabids, the first independent Islamic dynasty in Ifriqiyā, the political

<sup>22</sup> He lived for some years in Tāhert, capital of the Rustumids in Algeria. On him see Marçais 1913.

<sup>23</sup> On Qayrawān cf. Talbi 1978. On its importance in the Arabization process cf. Marçais 1961: 178ff.

situation did not improve and the town was attacked in 810 by Ibrāhīm I and destroyed in 824 by Ziyādat Allāh (Talbi 1978: 827). Only later, in the ninth century, when Qayrawān became the capital of the independent Aghlabid kingdom, did the town develop into one of the most significant cultural and religious centres in North Africa and played a crucial role in the spreading of the Mālikite law school in the whole of the Islamic West, from al-Andalus in the north to the Sahara in the South. The town of Qayrawān was an unavoidable staging post on the land route connecting Egypt to the western Maghreb. It was precisely this role as a junction that, according to William Marçais, made Qayrawān the origin of the spread of all pre-Hilālī Maghrebi dialects and there is no reason not to accept this assumption (Singer 1984: 9). In the medieval Islamic world, trade, as well as the pilgrimage to Mecca, fostered contacts between populations from different areas and contributed to the spread of linguistic features.

Medieval Arabic sources give us some details about the development of commercial routes across the whole North African coast, where a string of harbours at a convenient distance from one another connected the region with al-Andalus, Sicily, Egypt, and Syria. The geographer Al-Bakrī, for instance, comments in his *Masālik* that in the eleventh century ships from Alexandria, Syria, and Sicily called at the Tunisian harbour of Mahdia (al-Mahdiyya) (Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 683).<sup>24</sup> According to the same author, Andalusians played an important role: in the harbour of Būna (Fr. Bône, modern Annaba in Algeria) the majority of its merchants came from al-Andalus (Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 717). He also mentions that in the year 875 sailors from al-Andalus rebuilt the sea town of Tinis (now Ténès in Algeria, about 200 km west of Algiers) and settled there (2: 726). Oran (Wahrān), another important commercial centre and harbour, was founded in the year 903 by Muslims from al-Andalus (Marçais and Semmoud 2002: 49).

From Jewish documents of the Cairo Genizah, we know that in winter, when the sea was no longer navigable, caravans passed from Sijilmassa—the great desert port in southern Morocco—through Qayrawān, Tripoli, and Barqa to Egypt (Goitein 2010: 303). Towns such as Fes, Oujda, and Tlemcen were chief commercial hubs for the trade between the Sahel and the Mediterranean.

### 2.5.2 MOROCCO

In the western Maghreb, covering approximately the territory of present-day Morocco, the Arabization of the region after the Islamic conquest followed the same pattern as has been described for the eastern and central parts: the use of Arabic was limited to few towns and spread slowly out to the surrounding areas (Lévy 1998, Rosenberger 1998). We know, for instance, that by the twelfth century, the town of Fes was surrounded by Arabic-speaking Berber tribes (Al-ʿIdrīsī 1866: 90)<sup>25</sup>. It seems to be commonplace to emphasize the political instability in Morocco during

<sup>24</sup> The same work mentions Al-ʿIdrīsī (1866: 126) for the twelfth century.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 798 speaks only about 'Berber tribes'.

the first centuries after the Islamic conquest. Following this aprioristic judgment, according to some contemporary research, successive Berber and Khārijite revolts against the Umayyad power hindered, for a long time, the Arabization of the country. But in actual fact, the situation in Morocco during that time was quite similar to that in the aforementioned Qayrawān and hence there is absolutely no ground for considering Morocco different in this respect from the rest of the Maghreb.

In northern Morocco, apart from towns such as Tangiers or Ceuta (Sabta), the Arab newcomers settled in the ancient Roman town of Volubilis (Walīlī). This town, protected by the Zerhoun massif and in the middle of a fertile valley, was chosen by Idrīs I, at the end of the eighth century, as the seat of his independent kingdom, and Arabs from al-Andalus and Ifrīqiyā settled there.<sup>26</sup> It seems that it was King Idrīs I himself who decided to build a new town at Fes (probably because Walīlī became too small). Some years later, the transfer of the Idrīsīd capital to Fes started the decline of Walīlī: by the twelfth century even the name of the town was unknown to the Moroccans. Fes was founded in the year 789 at the intersection of two important commercial axes (from the Atlantic coast to central Morocco and from the Mediterranean to the Sahara), and, for this reason, the town rapidly became the most important commercial and religious centre of the country (Le Tourneau 1965). Immigrants from Qayrawān settled in Fes and from its very beginning the town attracted Jewish communities, which created a network of contacts with other Jewish populations across the whole Maghreb (Lévy 2009: 163–5). Such contacts between Jewish communities help explain the linguistic similarities in their dialects. Fes was of course not the only town founded by the Arabs in Morocco.<sup>27</sup> In the north they founded Bašra<sup>28</sup> and Nakūr.<sup>29</sup> Both settlements played an important role at the beginning of the Islamic period in Morocco. Both, however, had declined or disappeared by the eleventh century (Siraj 1998).

Bašra, founded at the beginning of the ninth century about 20 km south of the modern town of Ksar el-Kebir, owes its name to Bašra in Iraq, probably because its first inhabitants were of Iraqi origin. According to Al-Bakrī, members of the Arab tribe of Quḍā'a settled there (Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 789). Nakūr, situated about 140 km west of Melilla, was founded in 761 as capital of the local Sālihid dynasty, which maintained cordial commercial and political relations with the Umayyads of al-Andalus. In the year 1084, Nakūr was destroyed by the Almoravids. Pellat contends that the local language was predominantly Berber, but that Arabic must have also been spoken since the town enjoyed a certain cultural prestige (Pellat 1993). Concerning Ceuta (Sabta), Al-Bakrī mentions that in the eleventh century this town was inhabited by Arabs from the south Arabian tribe of Ṣadif and by Berbers.<sup>30</sup> In the Tafilet, Sijilmasa was founded in the year 758. This played a similar role in the south to Fes in the north: until the fifteenth century Sijilmasa enjoyed an exceptional

<sup>26</sup> On Walīlī see El Mansour 2002; Marçais 1961: 181–2.

<sup>27</sup> On Moroccan towns founded or re-founded by the Arabs cf. Cressier and García-Arenal 1998.

<sup>28</sup> On Bašra see Cressier and García-Arenal 1998.

<sup>29</sup> On Nakūr see Pellat 1993.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Bakrī 1992 2: 780. The *nisba* Ṣadafi was common in Ceuta until the fourteenth century (Ferhat 1993: 373).

position as a junction point for trade between the Sahara and the western Mediterranean. The town later became the capital of the independent Khārijite emirate of the Banū Midrās (Terrasse 1997).

The presence of typically urban linguistic features (such as loss of the interdentals, use of verb modifiers, etc.) in some southern Moroccan dialects like those of the Draa Valley, the Tafilalt, and Skoura (Skūra), can be explained as an influence of pre-Hilālī urban dialects of prosperous medieval towns such as Sijilmasa.

In the Middle Ages, the Maghreb was politically unified twice by Moroccan dynasties of Berber origin. The first unification was that of the Almoravids in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, who extended their power from Morocco to Ifrīqiyā (the eastern part of the Maghreb) and al-Andalus, as well as to parts of the Sahara and the Sahel. Under Almoravid rule the influence of Andalusian civilization spread to the whole of the North African region (Norris 1993: 587). The second unifying dynasty was that of the Almohads in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who created an empire from Morocco to Tunis and from al-Andalus to the Sahara, with Marrakech as its capital. Under Almohad rule began the second wave of Arabization, which had more important and deeper consequences for the linguistic situation of the region than the first wave. From the eleventh century onwards the Arabic tribes of the Banū Hilāl and Banū Sulaym, coming from the Arabian Peninsula via Egypt, moved westwards to the Maghreb and eventually arrived on the banks of the Senegal River. It should be remembered here that the western Maghreb, especially Morocco, has never been as isolated from the rest of the Arab world as has often been alleged.<sup>31</sup> For one thing, Morocco always had very close relations with al-Andalus and was the gateway for all Andalusians travelling to the east. Secondly, pious Moroccans liked to perform the pilgrimage in spite of the great distance between their country and Mecca.<sup>32</sup> For this reason, in the Middle Ages there existed important Moroccan colonies in both Alexandria and Cairo.<sup>33</sup> In Alexandria a *madrasa* for Maghrebi students was founded by the Ayyūbid ruler Ṣalāh ad-Dīn in the twelfth century,<sup>34</sup> and documents from the Cairo Genizah bear witness to a dynamic exchange of merchants and craftsmen between Egypt and North Africa (Goitein 2010: 279–307, 309–28)<sup>35</sup>.

It is no coincidence that Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (1304–68), one of the most famous and celebrated travellers in the Arab world, was a Moroccan, born in Tangiers.<sup>36</sup> In the

<sup>31</sup> See, for instance, Rubin 2004: 334.

<sup>32</sup> Ferhat 1993: 329–33; from the twelfth century onwards, ships owned by merchants from Genoa and Pisa regularly carried Moroccan and Andalusian pilgrims from Ceuta to Alexandria.

<sup>33</sup> On their way to the Hijāz pilgrims from the Maghreb used to spend time in Cairo, especially during the month of Ramadan, and they stayed at the Ibn Ṭulūn mosque. The Maghreb always provided an important contingent of the al-Azhar students (cf. Jomier 1960: 816; Behnstedt, 1980: 37).

<sup>34</sup> Müller-Wiener 1992: 127. On Maghrebi influence in Alexandria cf. Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume.

<sup>35</sup> Goitein 2010: 344 points out that between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries some coastal towns of the Red Sea and Arabia 'were flooded with people coming not only from the larger cities of the Muslim west, such as Barqa and Tripoli, Libya, Kairouan and Mahdia, Tunisia, Tlemcen, Algiers, Fes and Tangier, Morocco, Malaga and the isle of Majorca, Spain, but also from small and out-of-the-way places, such as (Jabal) Nafūsa, Libya, Urbus, Tunisia, and Der'a, Morocco'.

<sup>36</sup> On him see Waines 2010.

seventeenth century, the French captive, Moüette, speaks of large groups of Moroccan pilgrims coming back from Mecca across Egypt, Libya, and the Central Maghreb to the Tafilalt (Moüette 1683: 189ff.). In this context, it should also be noted that the Moroccan *‘ulamā’* used to travel for study purposes to the great Islamic teaching centres in the Middle East, as the biographical literature (*ṭabaqāt*) informs us. In brief, contact with Egypt and the Mashreq was not the exception, but the rule. And this is one reason why eastern linguistic innovations (such as the use of the verb *šāf* ‘to see’) found their way to the Maghreb.

### 2.5.3 THE BANŪ HILĀL

The expansion to the west of the Banū (or Banī) Hilāl tribes is depicted by Arab historians and geographers as a scourge which desolated large parts of the Maghreb. Ibn Khaldūn, for instance, compares the Banū Hilāl to a cloud of locusts ravaging a field (Idris 1971). In his book *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq* Al-ʿIdrīsī complains about the destruction caused by the Banū Hilāl (Al-ʿIdrīsī 1866: 128, 129, 142) and he expressly blames them for the decline of Qayrawān.<sup>37</sup> The question of whether this description (which was widely embraced by French colonial ideology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) actually reflects historical facts need not be discussed here. The economic impact in North Africa was probably less severe than some Arabic sources depict. There is a certain contradiction, for instance, in the fact that Al-ʿIdrīsī, after having blamed the ruin of Qayrawān on the Banū Hilāl, goes on to describe Tunis as a flourishing town whose inhabitants benefit from trade with them (Al-ʿIdrīsī 1866: 130). The Banū Hilāl and Banū Sulaym tribes played an important role in the internal politics of the Maghrebi kingdoms by sometimes furnishing their rulers with troops, and sometimes participating in rebellions against them, even creating short-lived independent states in various parts of North Africa. We know that the Almohads deported Hilālī tribes from the central Maghreb to the Atlantic plains of Morocco. The Almohad caliph Al-Manṣūr, for instance, established nomadic Arab tribes (such as the Khulṭ) in the plains of the ancient Tāmasna, between Rabat and the Umm ar-Rabīʿ river (Ferhat 2000). These immigrant Arab tribes accelerated and deepened the Arabization of the Maghreb since a large proportion of the Berber population (in particular those living as pastoral nomads) was gradually assimilated by the newcomers who had to share with them pastures, as well as seasonal migration paths (Marçais 1913; Idris 1971). It seems that by around the fifteenth century the regions occupied by modern Tunisia had already been almost completely Arabized (Marçais 1961: 190).

As Colin (1930) pointed out, documents from the twelfth and fourteenth centuries show that some of the characteristic features of modern urban Moroccan dialects were already present at that time. The most important are:

- a) pharyngealization of plain consonants such as *\*/s/ > /ʃ/*: *\*sūr > ʃūr* ‘wall’ (modern Moroccan *ṣūr*)

<sup>37</sup> Qayrawān was besieged and sacked by the Banū Hilāl in 1054–7.



- b) shift from interdental fricatives to dental occlusives
- c) shift \*/ / > /w/
- d) \**ġāmi*<sup>c</sup> (today *žāmā*<sup>c</sup>) ‘mosque’ is f
- e) pl morphemes {CīCān} from singulars {CāC}: *wād* ‘river, valley’ → *wīdān*, *fās* ‘pickaxe’ → *fīsān*
- f) prefix *n-* for the 1sng of the p-stem
- g) ending *-u* (instead of *-ūna*) for the 3mpl and 2mpl of the p-stem
- h) pattern I verbs instead of pattern IV
- i) *bāš* ‘in order to, in order that’
- j) merger of the prep \**ʔilā* ‘to, toward’ with \**li-* ‘for’ (today *l-* in both cases)
- k) \**zawġ* ‘pair’ for ‘two’ (today *žūž*, *zūž*, *zūz*)
- l) *mtā*<sup>c</sup> as genitive marker

From the sixteenth century onwards, ports such as Tangiers, Larache, El Jadida (Mazagan), Asfi (Portuguese Safim, French Safi), and Essaouira (Mogador) fell under Portuguese, Spanish, or even English control. Some of these Moroccan towns, such as Tangiers, went through a long turbulent period:

- 1471 Portuguese rule
- 1580 Spanish rule (union of Portugal with Spain)
- 1640 Portuguese rule (after Portugal’s independence)
- 1661 English rule (as part of Catherine of Braganza’s dowry to Charles II)
- 1684 Moroccan reconquest by the Sultan Mulay Ismail
- 1923 International Zone
- 1940 Spanish occupation
- 1945 restoration of the International Zone
- 1956 independence of Morocco and of the International Zone.

The history of Oran in Algeria is similar:

- 1505 Spanish conquest
- 1708 Ottoman conquest
- 1732 Spanish reconquest
- 1792 end of the Spanish occupation, Oran under the rule of the Bey of Mascara
- 1831 French conquest
- 1962 independence of Algeria.

As a consequence of these periods of foreign occupation, many borrowings, especially from modern Spanish, entered the dialects of Tangiers and Oran.

## 2.6 PHONOLOGY

A diachronic outline of the consonantal system of Maghrebi dialects is given in Cantineau 1960: 15–88 and Marçais 1977: 2–23. Concerning Morocco specifically, cf. Heath 2002: 131–81.



## 2.6.1 CONSONANTS

Some unusual characteristics are worth highlighting:

- The voiceless plosive *p* occurs generally in loans from European languages; indeed, there are some cases in which the loans are old, probably from Latin. For instance, south of Chaouen and among the Mtiwa the word for ‘chameleon’ is *paxxāxa* or *pakka* (etymology unknown, WAD I: 372, map 126).
- Labialization with simultaneous pharyngealization of *b* > *bᵇʷ* and *m* > *mᵇʷ* occurs in Hilālī dialects: *bᵇʷa* ‘daddy’, *mᵇʷi* ‘mummy’.
- The shifts *m* > *b* and *b* > *m* are quite common in both Hilālī and pre-Hilālī dialects: *bənt* > *mənt* ‘daughter’ (Ḥassāniyya), *mən* > *bən* ‘who’ (Chaouen).
- A voiced fricative realization of *f* > *v* is one of the hallmarks of Ḥassāniyya: *fil* > *vīl* ‘elephant’ (Cohen 1963: 8–9; Taine-Cheikh, this volume).
- Occasionally there are examples of the shift \**t* > *f*: \**tāni* > *fāni* ‘second’ (dialect of the Z<sup>s</sup>ir).<sup>38</sup>
- Affrication of *t* > *tʃ* [tʃ] is very common in Morocco and Algeria but unknown in Tunisia (Durand 2007: 245).
- The old interdental phonemes have been preserved in Hilālī ‘bedouin’ dialects like Ḥassāniyya, the dialect of the Z<sup>s</sup>ir (in Morocco), the Maṛāzīg in southern Tunisia, and the Libyan ‘bedouin’ dialects. In urban dialects, either of pre-Hilālī (including Maltese) or of Hilālī origin, the interdentals have generally shifted to dental occlusives (\**ḏ* > *d*, \**t̪* > *t* and \**ḏ* > *ḏ*): \**taman* > *tāmān* ‘price’, \**tānī* > *tāni* ‘second’, \**ḏukūra* > *dkūra* ‘boys’, \**ḏahr* > *dhar* ‘back’ (Anjra, Vicente 2000: 53–4); \**tawb* > *tūb* ‘cloth’, \**ḏabiḥa* > *dbiḥa* ‘slaughter’, \**ḏufr* > *dfar* ‘nail’ (Marrakech, Sánchez 2014: 89–90).
- Exceptions to this shift are found in some of the ancient urban dialects like those of Ténès, Cherchell, Constantine, Tunis, or Sousse, which have preserved the interdental phonemes (Marçais 1977: 9 and Talmoudi 1980: 27–9): *tūm* (< \**tūm*) ‘garlic’, *ḏrāḥ* (< \**ḏirāḥ*) ‘arm’, *ḏuhr* (< \**ḏuhr*) ‘noon’ (Cherchell, Grand’Henry 1972: 6–7);<sup>39</sup> *t̪nīn* (< \**t̪nīn*) ‘two’, *t̪na* (< \**t̪nā*) ‘to fold’, *ḏhar* (< \**ḏahr*) ‘back’ (Tunis, Singer 1984: 42–5). Muslim Tunis has interdentals *t̪* and *ḏ* but Jewish Tunis only occlusives *t* and *d* (Cohen 1975: 19).

In Algiers both the interdental and occlusive variants are present. This fluctuating situation was described by Ph. Marçais in the 1970s (Marçais 1977: 9) and has been confirmed again (by way of linguistic surveys) for the 2000s: *tlāṭa* ~ *tlāta* ‘three’, *ḏurk* ~ *durk* ‘now’ (Boucherit 2002: 42–5; 2006: 61).

<sup>38</sup> This shift is old, cf. Cantineau 1960: 40–1. It also occurs further east, for example in the dialects of Siirt (Libya), Palmyra and Soukhne (Syria), and the Baḥārna dialects of Bahrain (Prochazka 1981; Holes 1983a).

<sup>39</sup> Grand’Henry explains the occurrence of interdentals in Cherchell as an Andalusī influence, since this town received a great number of Andalusian refugees; nevertheless, interdentals occur also in towns where the Andalusī influence was less significant.

- Worth mentioning in this context is the case of Casablanca: thanks to a collection of phrases edited and published by Georg Kampffmeyer, we know that at the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of its inhabitants were semi-nomadic Arabs from the surrounding areas who spoke a Hilālī ‘bedouin’ dialect with interdental. But, as the author remarks, they had already begun to realize historical interdentals as occlusives;<sup>40</sup> this shift is surely due to the influence of newcomers (merchants, officials, Muslim scholars, etc.) from towns like Tangier, Rabat, or Fes, who spoke more prestigious dialects which had occlusives, not interdentals. The same shift took place in Tripoli, where the dialect, of bedouin origin, merged interdentals with dental occlusives (and probably for the same reasons as in Casablanca): \**tlāṭa* > *tlāta* ‘three’, \**talğ* > *talž* ‘snow’, \**ḏahab* > *dhāb* ‘gold’, \**ḏull* > *ḏull* ‘shade’ (Pereira 2009: 548–9). In the eastern Moroccan town of Oujda, the evolution was similar but more recent: at the beginning of the 2000s only old informants retained interdentals, while among young speakers the shift to the occlusives was the rule (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2005: 17).
- Interdental phonemes in some northern pre-Hilālī dialects (for instance, Chaouen in Morocco) have a quite different origin, and arose as a result of the influence of the Berber substrate. They occur only in intervocalic or final position: \**qālat* > \**ālāt* ‘she said’, \**zayt* > *zīt* ‘oil’, \**tlāṭa* > *tlāta* > *tlāta* ‘three’, \**ibn* ‘ādam > *mnāḏām* ‘human being’, \**bilād* > *blād* ‘land’ (Moscoso 2003: 39–40).<sup>41</sup>
- The affricate \**ğ* is usually realized as fricative *ž*: exceptions are found in northern Morocco and northern Algeria but never in intervocalic position. Dissimilatory deaffrication of \**ğ* occurs in contact with sibilants: \**ğazīra* > *gzīra* ‘island’, \**agūz* > *gūz* ‘old man’. The shift \**ğ* > *d* in words like \**ğāza* > *dāz* ‘he passed’ presupposes an ancient affricate realization of *ğ* [tʃ].
- In Jewish and ‘sedentary’ dialects in northern Morocco the palatal liquid \**r* shifted to the velar fricative *g* or to the uvular fricative *ʁ*. There is no agreement between scholars concerning this shift: for some, there is no difference between *g* (< \**r*) and *g* (< \**ğ*) (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2002: 60); others assert that there is a difference and prefer to transcribe this phoneme as *ʁ*.<sup>42</sup> The shift \**r* > *g*/ *ʁ* is old (in Iraq already present in the ninth century according to Blanc 1964: 23–5, and see Procházka, this volume).
- As is the case in the eastern Arab World, the uvular \**q* may be realized in ‘sedentary’ dialects as *q*, *ʔ*, or *k* (i.e. as a voiceless reflex) but in ‘bedouin’ dialects it is realized as *g*. In Maghrebi urban dialects of Hilālī origin such as those of Casablanca or Marrakech the realization *g* alternates with *q*: *gāl* ‘he said’ but *quddām* ‘in front of’ (Casablanca).

<sup>40</sup> Kampffmeyer 1912: vi and x; Aguadé 2005: 61–2. On merchants from Fes and Rabat established in Casablanca cf. Miège and Hugues 1954: 213.

<sup>41</sup> In the dialects of the Branes (Morocco) the shift may occur in every position: *ktābtu* ‘you wrote’ (Colin 1921: 39).

<sup>42</sup> For instance, Rahmouni claims there is a difference between the Chefchaouen and Tetouan realizations, but does not give an exact description (Rahmouni 2014: 29–30).

- In Tunis, a pre-Hilālī dialect, original \**q* is preserved except in loans from ‘bedouin’ dialects like *garžūma* ‘throat, gullet’ (Durand 2007: 244).
- The cluster *qt* shifts in Northern Morocco (Tanger, Jbāla) to *xt*: *waqt* > *wakt* > *waxt* ‘time’ (for Anjra, see Vicente 2000: 52; Bravmann 1960).
- Pharyngealization of plain consonants is a very common feature in Morocco and Algeria (especially in all Hilālī dialects): \**dār* > *dār* ‘house’ (≠ *dār* ‘he made’), \**raʿs* > *rāṣ* ‘head’, \**fam* > *fuṣṣ* ‘mouth’, \**sultān* > *ṣalṭān* ‘sultan’. Examples of a phonemic opposition between plain and pharyngealized consonants are: *būla* ‘urine’ ≠ *būla* ‘light-bulb’, *lbāba* ‘crumb’ ≠ *l-bāḥa* ‘to daddy’, *žāri* ‘running’ ≠ *žāri* ‘my neighbour’ (Casablanca) (Aguadé 2008: 290).

## 2.6.2 VOWELS

### 2.6.2.1 Short and long vowels

It was once commonplace to assert that the loss of short vowels increases as one travels from east to west in the Maghreb, i.e. from Libya to Morocco (Marçais 1977: 13). However, matters are more complex and to claim that in the majority of the west North African dialects the short vowels \**a*, \**i*, and \**u* all shifted to *ə* (Willms 1972: 3) is a gross overgeneralization and takes no account of geographic localization. Whereas Tunis preserves all the short vowels *a*, *i*, *u* (Durand 2007: 246–7),<sup>43</sup> Djidjelli (Algeria) has only a vowel *ə*, Casablanca (as well as Larache and Marrakech) have *ə* and *u*, and Ḥassāniyya *a* and *ə* (B&W 2005: 68).<sup>44</sup> In Morocco, however, the Huwwāra dialect has all three short vowels (*a*, *ə*, *u*) (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2002: 61), as does the dialect of Tangier (Aguadé 2016).

The long vowels \**ā*, \**ī*, \**ū*, by contrast, are all well preserved in the North African dialects (as is also the case in eastern ones) (Cantineau 1960: 92; Fischer and Jastrow 1980: 54; Marçais 1977: 12.). The long vowels *ā*, *ī*, *ū*, as well as the short ones *a*, *ə*, *i* and *u*, have several allophones ([a:], [æ:], [ɑ:], [e:], [i:], [ɪ:], [o:], [ʊ:], etc. and [a], [æ], [ɑ], [e], [i], [ɪ], [o], [ʊ], etc.) depending on the consonantal environment (detailed description in Cantineau 1960: 96–102, 110–12; Marçais 1977: 5–6).

### 2.6.2.2 Short vowel elision

Common to all North African dialects is the trend to drop short vowels in open syllables (and in a more consequential way than in the Arab East or in Egypt). In Hilālī ‘bedouin’ dialects this trend is less general than in ‘sedentary’ ones. In Libya, for instance, short vowels in open unstressed syllables are found in eastern dialects as

<sup>43</sup> But Jewish Tunis (Cohen 1975: 58–9) has basically one short vowel *ə* and in only very few cases there is an opposition *ə* ≠ *a* (for instance *maktūb* ‘pocket’ ≠ *maktūb* ‘written’).

<sup>44</sup> In Casablanca the opposition *ə* ≠ *u* results from preservation of \**u* in some words (due to written Arabic influence) such as *madd* ‘extend, hold out!’ ≠ *mudd* ‘container used for measuring grain’, *ḥabb* ‘he kissed’ ≠ *ḥubb* ‘love’ (Durand 1994: 40; Aguadé 2003: 94; concerning Larache and Marrakech cf. Guerrero 2015: 61, Sánchez 2014: 76). Against the interpretation of *u* in such cases as a labialization cf. Behnstedt and Benabbou 2002: 62, n. 30.

well as in the Fezzan and Misurata, whereas they are absent in Tripolitania: *žibāl* ‘mountain’, *kitáb* ‘he wrote’, but *žbāl* and *ktāb* in Tripoli (Pereira 2007: 55). The situation is similar among the Maṛāzīg (southern Tunisia), where short *a* may occur in stressed or unstressed syllables, whereas short *u* and *i* only occur in stressed syllables (Ritt-Benmimoun 2011: 25). In Ḥassāniyya, short vowels in open syllables are rare, and may occur only in specific contexts, the general rule being to introduce epenthetic vowels after elision of short vowels (Taine-Cheikh 2007: 242, Cohen 1963: 81–4, 98).<sup>45</sup> In Morocco, for pre-Hilālī as well as urban Hilālī dialects (Casablanca, Marrakech, etc.) the rule is that short vowels do not occur in open syllables or word-finally: *\*daxaltu* > *dxālt* ‘I entered’, *\*fahima* > *fhām* ‘he understood’, *\*ṭarīq* > *ṭrīq* ‘way’ (Casablanca). In such dialects, and in order to avoid the occurrence of a short vowel in an open syllable, vowel elision and metathesis take place: *šāfār* ‘he travelled’ > *šāfru* ‘they travelled’, *kāmmāl* ‘he finished’ > *kāmmḷu* ‘they finished’, *ktāf* ‘shoulder’ > *kātfi* ‘my shoulder’, *šrāb* ‘he drank’ > *šrḃu* ‘they drank’ (Caubet 2008: 276, Aguadé 2008: 289). The same occurs in urban dialects in other parts of the Maghreb like Tunis (Gibson 2009: 565) and Chercell (Grand’Henry 1972: 28–9).

The general tendency to elide short vowels in North African dialects is usually explained as Berber substrate influence (Diem 1979: 52–3, El Aissati 2006: 295–6, among many others). However, Kossmann has recently questioned this assumption, arguing that this is an ahistoric view, as features in modern Berber languages are often taken without questioning their historical development. The possibility cannot be excluded that a process of elision happened separately in Berber and in Arabic and that the similarities are due to parallel developments rather than a substrate.<sup>46</sup>

### 2.6.2.3 Vowel quantity

The question concerning the existence of quantity oppositions in Moroccan dialects is today a controversial matter, with some scholars simply denying it. According to Heath, there is no length opposition in northern and Jbāla dialects, yet this feature is present in other, central and southern, dialects (Heath 2002: 188–9). On the other hand, Behnstedt has defended with solid arguments the existence of quantity opposition in all Moroccan dialects, pointing out that long vowels in such dialects are as long as they are in eastern Arabic dialects (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2002: 62; Behnstedt 2004: 53). In any case, even if it is true that quantity opposition is not very functional in Moroccan Arabic owing to the general reduction and loss of vowels, minimal pairs can easily be found (Aguadé 2008: 289).

*ā* (= [a]) ≠ *ā*: *xamsa* ‘five’ ≠ *xāmsa* ‘fifth (f)’, *ḥmaq* ‘crazy’ ≠ *ḥmāq* ‘he became crazy’, *kḥal* ‘black’ ≠ *kḥāl* ‘he turned black’.  
*u* ≠ *ū*: *dxul* ‘enter!’ ≠ *dxūl* ‘entrance’.

<sup>45</sup> This is the case in other dialects (for instance the Maṛāzīg).

<sup>46</sup> Kossmann 2013: 173: ‘This is a vacuous claim as long as we have no idea about the chronology of the developments [i.e. elision and syllable patterns] in Berber. It seems equally possible to consider the developments... as parallel developments, due to the close connections between speakers of the two language groups... In such a scenario, it is impossible to determine in which language the development started’.

### 2.6.2.4 Diphthongs

Concerning diphthongs, matters are quite complex and in both the Hilālī and pre-Hilālī dialects monophthongization may occur. This depends generally on the consonantal environment: contact with ʕ, h, x, and q helps to preserve the diphthongs. In any case, it is not possible to claim that urban ‘sedentary’ dialects monophthongize whereas the ‘bedouin’ ones preserve \*ay and \*aw or shift to a partial reduction \*ay > ē and \*aw > ō (Marçais 1977: 16–19, Grand’Henry 1972: 26). The old diphthongs \*aw and \*ay are generally preserved in the pre-Hilālī as well as in ‘bedouin’ Hilālī dialects. As for urban Hilālī dialects, monophthongization is the rule. However, there are in all these dialects numerous exceptions: in Morocco, for instance, a ‘sedentary’ dialect such as that of Anjra preserves the old diphthongs (\*yawm > yawm ‘day’, \*nawba > nawba ‘time, turn’, \*lawḥa > lawḥa ‘wooden tablet’: Vicente 2000: 34), whereas Jewish dialects generally monophthongize in spite of also being ‘sedentary’, as is also the case with the pre-Hilālī dialects of Fes and Rabat, and the Hilālī dialects of Casablanca and Marrakech (Heath 2002: 197–200).

The dialect of the Jews of Tunis has preserved the ancient diphthongs: ḥawma ‘quartier’, zaytūn ‘olive’, lawn ‘color’, layl ‘night’, etc. (Cohen 1975: 67). But among Muslims, monophthongization is the rule, and only women have preserved the old diphthongs.<sup>47</sup>

In Libya, reduction of old diphthongs is general: \*zayt > zēt ‘oil’, \*ḡayb > žēb ‘pocket’, \*yawm > yōm ‘day’ (Pereira 2009: 550).

Maltese preserves the old diphthongs, but reduction sometimes occurs: \*šayf > sajjf ‘summer’, \*šawm > sawm ‘fasting’, \*mawt > mewt ‘death’; but \*kayfa > kif ‘how’, \*yawm > jum ‘day’ (Ambros 1998: 27; Mifsud 2008: 148). As the case of Maltese shows, diphthong reduction in the Maghreb is old and was already present in this dialect, which was untouched by the Hilālī wave of Arabization.

In addition, an interesting Islamic coin from Carthage (eighth century) throws light on the question of how old the monophthongization in North African dialects actually is. The coin was minted in the name of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, with a legend in Latin: *MUSE F[ILII]US NUSIR*. Two phonetic features from the legend are striking (Durand 2007: 249):

- a) The ending -E in *MUSE* shows the presence of *imāla*: *Mūsa* > *Mūse*.
- b) The spelling *NUSIR* reflects monophthongization: *Nuṣayr* > *Nuṣīr*.

This suggests that *imāla* and diphthong reduction were present as early as the eighth century—in other words, contemporaneously with the Arabic conquest. We can conclude that both must have occurred in the Arabic spoken by the conquerors.

<sup>47</sup> Singer 1984: 179–81 (data from the 1980s). Gibson 2009: 564 remarks that this traditional feature of female speech is now somewhat stigmatized among the younger generation in Tunis.

### 2.6.2.5 *Imāla*

'First degree' *imāla* (i.e.  $a > \text{æ}$ ,  $e$ ) is quite common in all Maghrebi dialects, in medial or final position (Cantineau 1960: 98–9, Marçais 1977: 14–15), while 'second degree' *imāla* (i.e. the shift  $a > i$ , present in al-Andalus and some eastern dialects) seems to be very uncommon in the Maghreb: only first degree *imāla* in cases like *kān* > [kæ:n] 'he was' and *mša* > mšæ, mše 'he went' are common to all North African dialects. The *imāla* occurs especially in Libyan dialects: *hna* > [hne] 'we', *sma* > [sme] 'sky' (in Tripoli, Pereira 2009: 550; Pereira 2010:33).

One of the hallmarks of Maltese is the shift of the *imāla* to a rising diphthong: \**kān* > *kien* 'he was', \**bāb* > *bieb* 'door', \**wad* > *wied* 'valley' (Ambros 1998: 24).

A peculiar case is Anjra in northern Morocco (Vicente 2000: 28–9, 34–5) where, especially among elderly women, both first and second degree *imāla* may occur:<sup>48</sup> *mdīna* > *mđīnæ* 'town', *Māliča* > *Māliči* 'Malika', *nʿasna* > *nʿasni* 'we slept', *žīna* > *žīni* 'we came'. In pause -i# and -u# shift to diphthongs: *dyāli* > *dyālay* 'my, mine', *rāsi* > *rāsai* 'my head', *līlu* > *līlaw* 'for him', *yību* > *yībaw* 'they will cook'.

As has been mentioned earlier, *imāla* probably came to North Africa with the first wave of Arab conquerors.

## 2.7 NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

### 2.7.1 THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

The old definite article *al-* shifted to *l-* (*əl-/lə-*)<sup>49</sup> in North African dialects: *əl-bāb* 'the door', *lə-ktāb* 'the book', etc. In Tunisian dialects (Tunis, Susa, Maṛāzīg) instead of *əl-/lə* we find *il-/li-*: *li-ktāb* 'the book', *il-gamra* 'the moon', *iš-šams* 'the sun', *iž-ždīd* 'the new one' (examples from Tunis, cf. Gibson 2009: 566).<sup>50</sup>

As was already the case in OA, the article *l-* assimilates to the 'sun' (i.e. coronal) consonants (i.e. /l (l)/, /r (r)/, /n (n)/, /s/, /š/, /ʃ/, /z (z)/, /t/, /t̪/, /d/, /t̪/, /t̪/, /d̪/, /d̪/): *ḏ-dār* 'the house', *š-šif* 'the summer', *r-rāžəl* 'the man', *t-tālət* 'the third' etc. (examples from Casablanca). Examples of assimilation of *l-* to interdental in Ḥassāniyya are: *t-tālət* 'the third', *ḏ-ḏīb* 'the jackal', *əḏ-ḏbāb* 'the flies', *əḏ-ḏbāb* 'the hyenas'.

The article *l-* assimilates generally to /ž/: *əž-žnāža* 'the funeral', *ž-žū* 'the hunger', *əž-žbən* 'the cheese' (Tripoli examples) (Pereira 2009: 549). Some dialects go a step further and generalize the assimilation of the definite article to labials, velars, and post-velars: *l-kull* > *k-kull* 'the whole', *lə-bḥar* > *b-bḥar* 'the sea', *lə-mṛa* > *m-mṛa* 'the woman', *l-qalb* > *q-qalb* 'the heart' (Marçais 1977: 162).

Cases of the opposite phenomenon—the non-assimilation of the definite article to the 'sun' phonemes—have been described for rural dialects spoken east of Collo in

<sup>48</sup> Second-degree *imāla* could in this case be an influence of Andalusi Arabic.

<sup>49</sup> *lə-* phonetically realized as *le-*, *la-*, *lu-*, *lo-* depending on the consonants following the article (Marçais 1977: 162–3).

<sup>50</sup> See also Singer 1984: 437–8. Concerning Sūsa and the Maṛāzīg cf. respectively Talmoudi 1980: 136 and the texts collected in Ritt-Benmimoun 2011.

Algeria: *l-šāšiyya* ‘the hood of the *qšābiyya*’, *l-zūž* ‘the walnut’, *l-zwāyil* ‘the beasts of burden’, *l-tānya* ‘the second layer of (extracted) cork’ (Ostoya-Delmas 1938: 70).

An innovation of Moroccan and Algerian dialects is that Berber loanwords (and, by analogy, some European borrowings) generally never take the definite article. This feature brings about a certain ambiguity concerning the definiteness of the substantive: *ātāy* (< Eng. *tea*) ‘tea/the tea’ (e.g. *šrəbt ātāy* ‘I drank tea/the tea’), *tāta* ‘chameleon/the chameleon’, *xīzzu* ‘carrots/the carrots’, *ārgān* ‘argan tree/the argan tree’, *māṭīša* ‘tomatoes’<sup>51</sup> (e.g. *šrīt māṭīša* ‘I bought tomatoes/the tomatoes’ (examples from Casablanca). However, there are some exceptions to this rule. In Moroccan dialects, for instance, *sārūt* ‘key’ (< Ber. *tasarut* (cf. de Prémare 6: 230)) always takes the definite article: *s-sārūt* ‘the key’, *s-swārət* ‘the keys’.

## 2.7.2 THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

A typically Moroccan and western Algerian feature is the creation of an indefinite article formed by the numeral *wāḥəd/wāḥd* ‘one’. This indefinite article is not usual in eastern Algeria. Where it occurs, *wāḥəd* is invariable and precedes the definite substantive: *wāḥəd əl-bənt* ‘a girl’, *wāḥəd ət-ṭbīb* ‘a doctor’, *wāḥəd šāḥbi* ‘a friend of mine’, *wāḥəd wuld ‘ammi* ‘a cousin of mine’ (Casablanca examples, Aguadé 2008: 291).<sup>52</sup> In some dialects *wāḥəd/wāḥd* is shortened to *waḥ-*, *wāḥi-*, or *ḥa-*: *ḥa-l-kərsi* ‘a chair’, *ḥa-t-ṭufla* ‘a girl’, *ḥa-t-ṭful* ‘a boy’ (Djiddelli examples, Marçais 1956: 400). The peculiar syntax of this construction (= invariable indefinite pronoun + substantive determined by the definite article), is explained by Marçais as an analogy to the use of demonstrative pronoun: *ḥād ər-rāžəl* ‘this man’ (lit. ‘this the-man’) without excluding, however, the possibility of the influence of a Berber substrate (for instance *yan urgaz* ‘a man’ in Tashelhit) (cf. Marçais 1956: 403). On the other hand, Romance influence cannot be excluded a priori (but seems improbable since in Romance languages the indefinite article is always gender marked).

Another indefinite article in Moroccan and Algerian dialects is *ši* (< *šāy* ‘thing’): it is invariable and precedes singular or plural indeterminate substantives: *ši dār* ‘a house’, *ši bənt* ‘a girl, some girl’, *ši drari* ‘some children’, *ši ṭbīb* ‘a doctor, some doctor’ (Casablanca, Aguadé 2008: 291).<sup>53</sup> The indefinite *ši* indicates more vagueness or uncertainty than *wāḥəd l-*. In Tunisia and Libya *fərd* (< *fard* ‘individual’) is used: ‘*andhum fərd ktāb*’ ‘they have a book’ (Marçais 1977: 164–5).<sup>54</sup> In any case, it should not be forgotten that substrate influence may not necessarily be the explanation of the emergence of these indefinite constructions: *wāḥid* is also used as an indefinite article in Cairo, for instance, and in many other eastern dialects, e.g. *wāḥid mišri* ‘an Egyptian’ (Edzard 2006: 189).

<sup>51</sup> *māṭīša* (< Sp. *tomates*).

<sup>52</sup> This indefinite article is unknown in Tunisian and Libyan dialects (Marçais 1977: 163).

<sup>53</sup> Holes (2001: 284; 2016: 103) records a similar usage of *šay/ši* in Bahrain, and Eades (2008: 92) does so for the Omani dialects.

<sup>54</sup> The indefinite article *fard/ fadd* is also widely used in Mesopotamian Arabic, which may be its origin.



## 2.7.3 DUAL

A Maghrebi dialectal innovation is the fact that urban dialects in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco have preserved the dual but with a more restricted scope than elsewhere. The dual is only possible in these dialects with nouns denoting measures of time, distance, and weight, and only with nouns of Arabic origin:<sup>55</sup> *yūm ~yūmāyn* ‘day, two days’, *‘ām ~‘āmāyn* ‘year, two years’, *šahr ~šahrāyn* ‘month, two months’, *šbār ~šbārāyn* ‘span, two spans’ (Morocco).<sup>56</sup> By contrast, in ‘bedouin’ Hilālī dialects the dual is possible for all categories of noun (Marçais 1977: 115). This is the case even in the urban dialect of Tripoli: *ktābēn* ‘two books’, *bāntēn* ‘two girls’, *maftāhēn* ‘two keys’, *bābēn* ‘two doors’ (Pereira 2009: 554; 2010: 197–8). However, the dialect of the Jews of Tripoli has the same restrictions as have been mentioned for urban dialects in Algeria and Morocco (Yoda 2005: 204–5).

## 2.7.4 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Characteristic of the ‘sedentary’ dialects (Hilālī and pre-Hilālī) is the loss of gender distinctions in the pl, a feature which cannot go back to the influence of a Berber substrate since Berber shows gender distinction in all persons of the pl. Generally speaking, only ‘bedouin’ Arabic dialects preserve fpl forms.

Final *-a* in the 2nd and 3rd persons of the pl pron (*ntūma*, *hūma* in many dialects) is secondary and can be explained as a morphological analogy with other persons which have this ending: 1com sng *āna*, 2msng *nta*, 3msng *huwwa*, 3fsng *hiyya*, 1com pl *hna*. This analogical process is probably old, as the existence of the 3com pl *hūma* in Maltese suggests (indeed *intom*, without *-a*, for the 2com pl).

In other dialects, however, the coexistence of forms with and without the ending *-a* seems to indicate that this evolution is recent. This is the case in Djidjelli, where we have both original and secondary forms in the same dialect (Marçais 1956: 435) (Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1 Independent pronouns in Djidjelli, eastern Algeria

	sng		pl
1com	<i>āna</i>	1com	<i>hna</i>
2com	<i>nta</i> / <i>ntīna</i>	2com	<i>ntum</i> / <i>ntūma</i>
3m	<i>huwwa</i>	3com	<i>hum</i> / <i>hūma</i>
3f	<i>hiyya</i>		

<sup>55</sup> Caubet 2008: 280; Marçais 1977: 115–17. In Tunis (Medina) the usage of the dual (ending in *-īn*) is less restrictive than in Algeria or Morocco and thus the following forms are possible: *bītīn* ‘two rooms’, *lūnīn* ‘two colors’, *warqītīn* ‘two leaves’ (Singer 1984: 450–2).

<sup>56</sup> As for Tunis, cf. Durand 2007: 266. It seems that, until today, the increasing influence of MSA has not caused changes in the use of the dual in the North African pre-Hilālī dialects.



Gender loss in the pl is the norm in ‘sedentary’ dialects whereas in the sng gender marking or merging in the 2nd person may occur. Tunis, for instance, presents gender merging: 1com *āna*, 2com *ənti*, 3m *huwwa*, 3f *hiyya*; pl 1com *əhna*, 2com *əntūma*, 3com *hūma* (Durand 2007: 251). In Casablanca the 2sng is marked for gender: m *nta*, f *nti*.

Gender marking in sng and pl occurs in the ‘bedouin’ dialects of the Fezzān: sng 1com *āna*, 2m *ənta*, 2f *ənti*, 3m *huwwa* / *hu*, 3f *hiyya*, *hi*; pl 1com *hna* / *hənnna*, 2m *əntum*, 2f *əntən*, 3m *hum* / *humma*, 3f *hən* / *hənnna* (Marçais 2001: 173)<sup>57</sup>.

Ḥassāniyya has in the pl 2m *əntūma*, 2f *əntūmāti*, 3m *hūma*, 3f *hūmāti* (Cohen 1963: 148).

## 2.7.5 PRESENTATIVES

Maghrebi dialects use two presentatives, *ṛā-* and *hā-*. Both particles are used to emphasize an event and are similar in their use to English interjections like ‘Here, here is/are...!, Right there, take! See here!’ and take both the independent and the suffixed pron: *ṛāni*, *ṛāk*, *ṛāhu*, *ṛāna*, *ṛākum ṛāhum*; *hāni*, *hāk*, *hāhu*, *hāhi*, *hāna*, *hākum*, *hāhum* (Tripoli examples, Pereira 2010: 256–7). Morocco (Casablanca) has 2m *hāk*, 2f *hāki*, 2com pl *hāku* (instead of *hāk* and pl *hākum*); gender marking in the sng and the *-u* ending in the pl are probably to be explained by analogy to the imperatives (m *šūf*, f *šūfi*, pl *šūfu* ‘see!’) (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2005: 29).

## 2.7.6 NUMERALS

Two salient innovations are present in Maghrebi dialects: *žūž* / *zūz* for ‘two’ and *tasʿūd* / *tasʿud* for ‘nine’.

The numeral *žūž* / *zūz* (<\**zawğ* ‘pair, couple’) occurs in numerous Maghrebi dialects, especially the urban ones (Marçais 1977: 174). This is an old innovation, as it is already attested in Andalusian and Siculo-Arabic as well as in Maltese (Lentin 2002: 464–5). It also occurs in some Egyptian dialects (Holes 2004c: 843; B&W 1999: 357–8). In Morocco *žūž* / *zūz* is the only numeral for ‘two’: *tnayn* (<\**ʔitnayn*) occurs only in compound numerals (*tnayn u-tlātīn* ‘thirty two’). Reflexes of \**ʔitnayn* are found in ‘bedouin’ dialects, e.g. Ḥassāniyya *atnēyn* (Cohen 1963: 167). In Tripoli both numerals *zōz* and *tnēn* ~ *tnīn* are in use (Pereira 2010: 224, 229). Maltese uses *tnejn* as a numeral but only *žeuğ* as adjectival number (Ambros 1998: 90–1, Aquilina 1987–1990 2: 1460, 1612):<sup>58</sup> *žeuğ irhula* ‘two villages’, *žeuğ nisa* ‘two women’ (but: *tnejn tnejn* ‘two at a time’). The same basic system occurs in Tunis (Medina): *tnīn* ‘two’ but *zūz sāqīn* ‘two legs’ (Singer 1984: 608–9; Durand 2007: 256).

The numeral for ‘nine’ is a very interesting case. In compound numerals, Moroccan and Algerian dialects use *tasʿa* (like all other Arabic dialects); *tasʿa w-tasʿīn* ‘ninety nine’ (Morocco). But *tasʿa* is at the same time the 2msng of the p-stem of the verb *sʿa* ‘to beg’:

<sup>57</sup> Tripoli has lost gender distinctions (Pereira 2009: 551).

<sup>58</sup> In Maltese *žeuğ* has the variant (through metathesis) *giex*, *giex*.

*tasʿa* hence means ‘you will beg’, a highly impolite phrase. In order to avoid this, the euphemism *tasʿad* /*tasʿud* (root {s-ʿ-d}) ‘you will be happy’ was introduced. West Algerian dialects use *tasʿud* (Marçais 1977: 174). The Moroccan variant *tasʿūd* (with long *ū*) can be easily explained as a pattern shift from CəCCəC (= *tasʿad*) to CəCCūC (= *tasʿūd*), *tasʿad* being understood not as a verb but rather as a quadriradical substantive with the pattern CəCCūC, which is far more common in Moroccan Arabic than CəCCəC (Aguadé 2010: 275–7).

### 2.7.7 EXISTENTIAL PARTICLES

As in Mashreqi dialects, Maghrebi Arabic also uses the preposition *f-* (and its local reflexes) ‘in’ with suffixed pronoun to express existence: *vīh muškile* ‘there is a problem’ (Ḥassāniyya, Taine-Cheikh 1990: 156), *s-sūq fīh əl-xəḍḗra* ‘there are vegetables in the market’ (Casablanca). Tunis uses *fəmma* ‘there is’ (Durand 2007: 254).

Participles may also be used as existential particles. Ḥassāniyya exhibits *xāleg*, f *xālge*, pl *xālgīn* ‘there is/there are’ (from *xləg* ‘to be born, to exist’): *xālge mbūru* ‘there is bread’ (Taine Cheikh 2007: 249). Moroccan and Algerian dialects use *kāyən*, f *kāyna*, pl *kāynīn* (active participle of *kān* ‘to be’): *kāynīn ši nās* ‘there are some people’, *kāynīn ḥammāmāt* ‘there are ḥammām-s’ (Casablanca), *wāš kāyən l-mākla?* ‘what is there to eat?’ (Boucherit 2006: 65).

### 2.7.8 GENITIVE PARTICLES

#### 2.7.8.1 Direct annexion

Direct annexion (*idāfa*) was the normal way in which the genitive was originally expressed in the ‘bedouin’ dialects of Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Ḥassāniyya in Mauritania, rather than with the use of genitive particles. The use of direct annexion in ‘sedentary’ dialects is restricted, but there are different degrees of restriction. In north Moroccan dialects its usage is limited to a very few cases (body parts, kinship terms, time words, and various idiomatic constructions with *mūl* ‘owner of’, etc.) (Harrell 1962: 194–201; Marçais 1977: 166–7), whereas in Skoura (Skūra) direct annexion is possible with many other types of noun: *kəlb s-sərrāḥ* ‘the dog of the shepherd’, *rāyṣ əl-məxxāra* ‘the chief of the bandits’ (Aguadé and Elyacoubi 1995: 128–9).

Today, however, the increasing influence of MSA on the dialects has resulted in more and more loans with the *idāfa* structures, e.g. *siyyārat t-taʿlīm* ‘driving school car’ (Casablanca).

#### 2.7.8.2 *ntāʿ*, *mtāʿ*

As in other Arabic dialects in the Maghreb *\*matāʿ* ‘property, possession’ was used as the genitive particle and evolved into *mtāʿ*, *ntāʿ*, and *tāʿ*. It is documented for the twelfth century (Marçais 1977: 168) and occurs in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

Taking into account that Maltese has *taʔ* (< *tāʕ*) as genitive particle (Ambros 1998: 76–8) and the fact that Malta was resettled around 1040 by Arabic speakers from Ifriqiya,<sup>59</sup> we can assume that *mtāʕ* was already in use at that period. Since the majority of the Egyptian dialects use *btāʕ* (< \**mtāʕ*) (B&W 1985b: map 189 (see also their remarks in 1985a: 78)), it is reasonable to suppose that *mtāʕ*/*ntāʕ* is even older and came to Tunisia with the first Arab conquerors. This assumption is further corroborated by the evidence that the use of *mtāʕ* as genitive particle is also attested in Siculo-Arabic (Agius 1996: 403; Metcalfe 2009: 218) (the island of Sicily was conquered by the Arabs in c.827). A secondary evolution of this genitive particle is that in some dialects *ntāʕ* may agree in gender or number with its head noun: *l-bnāt ntāʕ* *əm-məḍḍāsa* ‘the girls of the school’ (Marrakech) (Sánchez 2014: 216.); *žūž ‘abrāt ntāʕ* *t əl-bəšna* ‘two measures of maize’, *l-bībān ntāʕ* *əḍ-ḍār* ‘the doors of the house’ (Skūra) (Aguadé and Elyacoubi 1995: 130).

### 2.7.8.3 *dyāl*

The other most common analytic particle is *dyāl*, often shortened to *d-* (*dyāl* is mostly used with suffixed pronouns, *d-* more in nominal constructions), which may in some dialects also agree in gender and number with its head noun (*dyālt*, *dyāwl*). It is very common in Morocco as well as in northern Algerian towns. In Algiers today both genitive particles, *mtāʕ* and *dyāl*, are used: *l-ḥalfa dyāli* / *mtāʕi* ‘my espadrilles’ (Boucherit 2002: 30; 2006: 64). Jewish dialects in Morocco use *di* / *ddi* (< \**allaḍi*) (Heath 2002: 461; Durand 2009: 342); this particle occurs also in northern Algerian ‘sedentary’ dialects (Marçais 1977: 168).

The etymology of *dyāl* is not clear. Cf. Eksell Harning 1980: 112–13; Rubin 2004: 332. According to Colin (Marçais 1956: 418, n. 2), *dyāl* comes from a relative *ddi* with a suffixed preposition, e.g. *di* + *yāl* + suffix *-i*: ‘mine, what is for me’. The form *yāl* is problematic: for Colin *yāl* is an ancient form of modern *il* ‘for’;<sup>60</sup> but he does not give his source for this archaic *yāl*. If we assume that the preposition is *il* (or *l-* ‘for’), the result would be \**dil*: but in this case, how can the occurrence of *-ā* be explained? Heath, for his part, proposes L. *dē* ‘of’ as etymology: *dē* + *il* (Heath 2015). However, in this case the problem with the occurrence of *-ā* remains. Another etymology has been proposed by Durand, who postulates a reshaping of *allaḍi* in *ḍi+al* (2009: 342). Whatever the case, the etymology of *dyāl* still lacks a convincing explanation.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Eksell 2006b: 84 assumes that *taʔ* (< *mtāʕ*) came to Malta with Tunisian conquerors in the ninth century, but, as has already been mentioned, it seems that the Arab settlement of the island took place later, around the year 1040.

<sup>60</sup> About *il* cf. de Prémare 1: 66.

<sup>61</sup> Behnstedt and Woidich explain the shift \**dil* > *dyāl* as a morphological analogy to *mtāʕ*/*ntāʕ*; Aguadé, for his part, assumes that *dyāl* was originally the plural of \**dil* and that *dyāwl* would be a secondary plural (see WAD IV [forthcoming]).

## 2.8 VERB MORPHOLOGY

### 2.8.1 STRONG VERBS

The prefix *n-* for the 1sng of the p-stem—one of the most salient and distinctive features of all Maghrebi dialects—is surely old and must have come with the Arabs in the seventh and eighth centuries, since it also occurs in Andalusī Arabic and in Maltese (Fischer and Jastrow 1980: 32). It is not clear whether this feature is of Egyptian origin: the modern forms *niktib~niktibu* in the Egyptian oases may be the result of later contacts with Maghrebi tribes (Woidich 1993; Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume).

Loss of gender marking in pl verb forms is common to the majority of North African dialects. Only some ‘bedouin’ dialects from Libya and southern Tunisia present gender-marked forms in the pl: s-stem 2m *-tu* ≠ 2f *-ten*, 3m *-aw* ≠ 3f *-an* (*qətlən* ‘they (f) have killed’, *qəltən* ‘you (fpl) have killed’; p-stem *yəqtlən* ‘they (f) kill’, *təqtlən* ‘you (fpl) kill’) (Marçais 1977: 37–8; Marçais 2001: 109–10; Pereira 2007: 55), but Tripoli no longer has gender distinctions: *ktəbtu*, *kətbu* and *təktbu*, *yəktbu* (Pereira 2009: 254). The loss of gender distinctions in the pl in Ḥassāniyya—a pure ‘bedouin’ dialect—is striking: Berber substrate influence, in this case, must be excluded, since Berber verbs have gender-marked plurals.

In the s-stem there is generally a gender distinction in the 2sng: *ktəbt* ‘you (m) wrote’ ≠ *ktəbti* ‘you (f) wrote’. But in some Moroccan dialects (Casablanca) gender merger is the rule: *ktəbti* ‘you (m/f) wrote’ (Marçais 1977: 36). What is peculiar is the 2com pl ending of the s-stem *-tum* in Anjra (north Morocco), an ending which does not occur in any other North African dialect: *čuftum* ‘you have seen’, *l’əbtum* ‘you have played’, *qrītum* ‘you have read’. The influence of Andalusī Arabic seems clear in this case (Vicente 2000: 62)<sup>62</sup>.

In the case of the s-stem, the ending for the 3fsng is generally *-ət*: *kətbət* ‘she wrote’ (< \**katabat*). But in some dialects (Casablanca) an innovation took place and the ending is *-āt*: *kətbāt* (seemingly by analogy with the ending *-āt* of the weak verbs: Aguadé 2008: 291).

In order to avoid short vowels occurring in open syllable as a result of suffixation by inflexional endings, verbal stems shift in the s-stem from a pattern *CCəC* to *CəCC*: *ktəb* + *-ət* > *kətbət* ‘she wrote’, *ktəb* + *-u* > *kətbu* ‘they wrote’. This is the normal rule for the majority of the Maghrebi dialects.<sup>63</sup> In the p-stem matters are more complex and there are three solutions to the problem of short vowels in open syllable which would result from vowel-initial suffixation (Marçais 1977: 40–1):

- a) Pattern shift: *nəktəb* ‘I write’ but *nəktbu* ‘we write’. This is the solution found in the Moroccan dialects.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Andalusī Arabic *šarābtum* ‘you drank’ (Corriente 2013a: 87). Anjra lies in a region where Andalusians settled.

<sup>63</sup> Exceptions are dialects which allow short vowels in open syllables (Fezzān for instance: Marçais 2001: 112–13).

- b) Elision of the vowel: *nəktəb*, but *nəktbu* in pl. This solution is found in Tunisian dialects as well as in the east and north and in ‘bedouin’ dialects (*nəktbu* in Ḥassāniyya, Cohen 1963: 87).
- c) Gemination of the first root consonant: *nəktəb* but pl *nəkkətbu*. This is the solution adopted by central and western Algerian dialects<sup>64</sup>.

## 2.8.2 GEMINATE VERBS

Almost all Maghrebi dialects insert a predesinential *-i-* in the s-stem paradigm of geminate verbs (as, indeed, do all Mashreqi ones). So for instance in the Muslim dialect of Marrakech in Morocco the verb *həzz* ‘to take, to pick up’ has the following forms<sup>65</sup> (Table 2.2).

TABLE 2.2 Geminate verbs, s-stem, Muslim dialect of Marrakech

	sng		pl
3m	<i>həzz</i>	3com	<i>həzzu</i>
3f	<i>həzzāt</i> <sup>66</sup>		
2com	<i>həzzīti</i>	2com	<i>həzzītu</i>
1com	<i>həzzīt</i>	1com	<i>həzzīna</i>

The same scheme is found in Jewish Algiers: verb *mədd* ‘to hand, to extend’: sng *mədd*, *məddət*, *məddīti*, *məddīt*, pl *məddu*, *məddītu*, *məddīna* (Cohen 1912: 185). There are, however, a few pre-Hilālī dialects that have the s-stem paradigm without predesinential *-i-* (unaugmented forms). An example of this is the verb *ḥabb* ‘to kiss, to like’ in the Jewish dialect of Sefrou (Stillman 1988: 43) (Table 2.3).

TABLE 2.3 Geminate verbs, s-stem, Jewish dialect of Sefrou

	sng		pl
3m	<i>ḥabb</i>	3com	<i>ḥabbu</i>
3f	<i>ḥabbt</i>		
2com	<i>ḥabbt</i>	2com	<i>ḥabbtu</i>
1com	<i>ḥabbt</i>	1com	<i>ḥabbna</i>

According to Blau forms with the predesinential *-i-* are archaic, and he assumes that this is an ancient Arabic feature; however, Grand’Henry (1991: 109) rejects the idea that forms such as *ḥallīt/ḥallayt* ‘I opened’ (with predesinential *-i-*) in the Maghreb are archaic—in his opinion they came later, with the Banū Hilāl.

<sup>64</sup> However, roots whose first radical is *l*, *r*, or *n* follow solution (b): *yəlbsu*, *yərslu*, *yənzlu*.

<sup>65</sup> Sánchez 2014: 122. The same paradigm is found in Casablanca.

<sup>66</sup> In Morocco some dialects show endings in *-ət* instead of *-āt*: Heath 2002: 223 (and map 4–18).

### 2.8.3 HOLLOW VERBS

Concerning the hollow verbs, Maghrebi dialects are not out of the ordinary and follow the same patterns as elsewhere. A peculiar case is that of some dialects around Taza, Morocco, in which analogy led to the lengthening of all short vowels in hollow verbs, including s-stem forms with a consonant-initial inflectional ending, e.g. *išūf* ‘to see’ > 1com sng *šūft* (instead of *šəft*), 1com pl *šūfna*, 2com pl *šūftu*; *išūš* ‘to search’ > 1com sng *šūšt*, 1com pl *šūšna*, 2com pl *šūštu* (Behnstedt and Benabbou 2002: 64).

### 2.8.4 THE VERBS *ra* AND *šāf*

Concerning the verb ‘to see’ in the Maghreb, *šāf~yšūf* is the most common verb (as in almost the whole of the contemporary arabophone world (WAD III: 332)): *ra~ira* is only found in some pre-Hilālī dialects and especially in the Jewish ones (WAD III: 331, map 362a). Instead of *šāf~yšūf* some Moroccan Jbāla dialects (Anjra, Tetouan, Chaouen) have *čāf~ičūf*, where *č* is a generalization of forms such as *tšūf* ‘you/she will see’ whereby the cluster *tš-* has been reanalysed as a root consonant *č*.<sup>67</sup> The ubiquity of *šāf~išūf* speaks for its old (pre-Classical) origin; however, as Behnstedt and Woidich assume, for unknown reasons this verb in the sense of ‘to see’ was rejected by Arabic lexicographers when they began to standardize the vocabulary of CLA in their dictionaries.<sup>68</sup> There is some evidence which suggests a late introduction of *šāf* into the Maghreb. First and foremost Maltese—a dialect free of Hilālī influence—has only *ra*. And Jewish dialects, especially in Morocco, use *ra* instead of *šāf*. In al-Andalus the verb *šāf* ‘to see’ is mentioned by Al-Shushtarī (d. 1269) and Ibn Zamrak (b. 1333) (Corriente 1997: 295), but not mentioned by earlier authors. Corriente deduces that this verb must have been spread by Muslim pilgrims returning from Mecca (Corriente 2013a: 125 (n. 276) and 128 (n. 282)). Since the verb *šāf* was already in use in al-Andalus before the year 1269, it is reasonable to assume that it was introduced in Morocco at an earlier date, probably in the twelfth century: this suggests a Hilālī origin. In some pre-Hilālī Muslim dialects it seems that *šāf* was introduced only around the second half of the twentieth century. For instance, in the 1950s in Algeria, the dialect of Djidjelli had both verbs, *ra* and *šāf* and, according to Marçais, *šāf* was a new loan (Marçais 1956: 163, 174). And in Morocco, in Anjra in the 1990s, young people used *čāf* instead of *ra* (Vicente 2000: 80, n. 64).

### 2.8.5 VERBAL MARKERS

Like other Arabic dialects, Maghrebi dialects have developed several verbal prefixes or markers which serve to express habitual, durative, or progressive aspects, as well as the future (Fischer and Jastrow 1980: 74–7; Durand 1991). In comparison with the Mashreq, the Maghreb shows less variety and has fewer markers to express durativity

<sup>67</sup> Heath 2002: 139; the same process has occurred in Bahrain (‘Arab dialects) (Holes 1983a: 25; WAD III: 332).

<sup>68</sup> WAD III: 332. Probably they found it too colloquial. On the origin of *šāf* cf. Bloch 1993.

or future.<sup>69</sup> Durative verbal markers are found in the Maghreb only among ‘sedentary’ dialects; the ‘bedouin’ dialects, in common with others in the Mashreq, use the p-stem without any kind of preverb. The most usual durative markers in North African dialects are:

- *kā-* (< *kān* ‘to be’) is usual in Morocco (Heath 2002: 210). In Algeria, Djidjelli uses *kā-* with the 3rd person but *kū-* for the 1st and 2nd: *kū-təžri* ‘you are running’ but *kā-təbki* ‘she is weeping’ (Marçais 1956: 151–2).
- *tā-* occurs in Morocco in Jewish and Muslim dialects (particularly in the south, Heath 2002: 210)<sup>70</sup> as well as in Algeria. East of Djidjelli *tā-* is used with the 3rd person and *tū-* with the 1st and 2nd (Marçais 1956: 152). In the Jewish dialect of the Tafilalt, there is an alternance: *tā-* for the 3rd persons and *tī-* for the 1st and 2nd (Heath and Bar-Asher 1982: 65).
- *taw* (< *tawwa* ‘now’) is the marker in Tunisian dialects: *taw nži* ‘I am coming now’ (Marçais 1977: 73).
- *qāʿad* (< participle of *qʿad* ‘to sit’) occurs in Tunis (*qāʿad nəktəb* ‘I am writing’ Singer 1984: 314) and in Malta: here the marker is *qieghed* / *qed* (*kont qieghed* / *qed nikteb* ‘I was writing’: Aquilina 1987–1990 2: 1124).
- *lā-* occurs in Chaouen and in other Jbāla dialects<sup>71</sup>: *lā-yži l-ʿid* ‘the feast is coming’ (Moscoso 2003: 113).

Future markers are present in both the ‘sedentary’ and ‘bedouin’ dialects:

- *ġādi* (participle of *ġda* ‘to go’): *ġādi dži* ‘she will come’, *ġādi nəklū* ‘we will eat’. *ġādi* is in Morocco the most widespread durative marker. It is usually invariable but in some dialects can take subject agreement: *ġāda ttiḥ əš-šta* ‘it will rain’ (Heath 2002: 216).
- *māš(i)* (participle of *mša* ‘to go’) present in north Morocco and in Jewish dialects (Heath 2002: 216–17): *f-š-šif māš ykūn hnāya* ‘in summer he will be here’ (Vicente 2000: 107).
- the s-stem *ba/ bba* (< *bga* ‘to want’) occurs in southern Morocco (Marrakech, Sous, Skoura) and takes subject agreement: *bāw ybṛʿu dārhum* ‘they will sell their house’ (Aguadé and Elyacoubi 1995: 86; see Owens, this volume).
- *lāhi* occurs in Ḥassāniyya: *lāhi nrudd ʿlikum* ‘I will tell you’ (Cohen 1963: 113).
- *ḥā-* is the (invariable) future marker in Tripoli: *ḥā-tži* ‘she will come’ (Pereira 2010: 455).
- *bāš* occurs in Tunis: *āna bāš nwalli nži* ‘I will come back’ (Singer 1984: 311; Gibson 2009: 569).

<sup>69</sup> On verbal markers in the Maghreb cf. Marçais 1977: 72–3; Aguadé 1996a.

<sup>70</sup> There are two possible etymologies for *tā-*: (1) from *tawwa* ‘now’; (2) from *hattā* ‘until’ (Aguadé 1996a: 202–3).

<sup>71</sup> Its origin is not clear. Berber and Arabic etymologies have been proposed (Aguadé 2004).

## 2.9 WORD ORDER: VSO OR SVO

It is often claimed that in OA the normal word order was VSO whereas in the dialects it is SVO. But this is an oversimplification: syntactic, rhythmic, and semantic factors all play a role in dialectal word order (Holes 2004a: 259ff.; B&W 2005: 17).

- Concerning Morocco, Ziamari summarizes the data, pointing out that there is little consensus among researchers concerning word order in Moroccan dialects (in fact, both VSO and SVO are common). She concludes that ‘VS order is the one used for the introduction of new referents and for introducing subjects in sequential events, being particularly common in narratives, while SV is used for given or contrastive subjects’ (Ziamari 2010: 194). In Ḥassāniyya the order of the verbal sentence is VSO (except in cases of thematization): only VSO is possible if the subject is undetermined (Taine-Cheikh 2007: 249).

## 2.10 LOANWORDS

### 2.10.1 BERBER

In comparison with the abundant Arabic loanwords in Berber dialects,<sup>72</sup> loans from Berber to North African Arabic dialects are by far less numerous and their quantity varies considerably depending on the region and the dialect.<sup>73</sup> Moroccan and Algerian dialects have more Berber loanwords than Tunisian ones do, and in Morocco a rural dialect like that of Skoura—an Arabic *Sprachinsel* south of the Atlas—probably borrowed more from Berber<sup>74</sup> than did the urban dialect of a traditional town like Fes, cradle of the religious sciences in the western Maghreb.<sup>75</sup>

Until today, the status of the Berber language among Arabophones is low and this may explain the small number of Berber loanwords in their dialects (disproportionately low in relation to the demographic importance of Berberophones in Morocco or Algeria). As might be expected in large regions whose original language was Berber, loanwords from this language are especially common in semantic fields such as plants, animals, agriculture, and architecture.<sup>76</sup> Examples of this are:

- *fəkrūn* (with many variants) ‘turtle’ (< Ber. *ifker*). This is probably the most widespread loan in the whole Maghreb, from Mauritania to Libya, including Maltese *fekruna* (WAD I: 378, map 128; de Prémare 10: 140).

<sup>72</sup> 38% for Kabyli and 25% for Tashelhit (Chaker 1995: 118, Aguadé and Behnstedt 2006: 289).

<sup>73</sup> El Aissati 2006: 294 (following data furnished by Chafik 1999) speaks of about 1,400 lexical items of Berber origin; however, their Berber etymology is not in all cases obvious.

<sup>74</sup> On Berber loans in Skoura see Aguadé and Elyacoubi 1995: 97, 107–8.

<sup>75</sup> In any case, we lack quantitative studies on the size of the Berber lexical influence on the Arabic dialects of the Maghreb.

<sup>76</sup> Many of such Berber loanwords are in turn of Latin origin.



- *āḡlāl* (variants: *ḡ<sup>w</sup>lāl*, *ḡlāl*) ‘snail’ (< Ber. *aḡ<sup>w</sup>lal*) in Morocco and Algeria (WAD I: 375, map 127).
- *tāqlit* ‘gecko’ (< Ber. *tāqlit*) in Marrakech (WAD I: 369, map 125a).
- *awtūl* in Djidjelli, *wṭila* in Skikda (< Ber. *awtul*) ‘hare’ (WAD I: 323, map 110).
- *tāta* ‘chameleon’ (< Ber. *tata*) in Morocco and Algeria (WAD I: 372, map 126; de Prémare 2: 5).
- *xīzzu* ‘carrots’ (< Ber. *xizzu* /*xuzzu*) in Morocco (WAD I: 468, map 159).
- *āḡrūm* ‘bread’ (< Ber. *aḡrum*) in Djidjelli (WAD II: 240, map 240).
- *sārūt* ‘key’ (< Ber. *tasarut*) in Morocco (WAD II: 175, map 224)<sup>77</sup>.
- *ṣīfəṭ* / *ṣayfaṭ* (and variants) ‘to send’ (< Ber. *ssifḍ*) is a very common verb in Morocco and western Algeria (WAD III: 444).
- *āšku* ‘because’ (< Ber. *ašku*) is usual in Skūra (Aguadé and Elyacoubi 1995: 140).

### 2.10.2 TURKISH

Morocco and Mauritania never came under Ottoman rule and for this reason there are relatively few Turkish loanwords in their dialects, compared to the Tunisian or Algerian dialects. In Tunisia, Turkish was the main language of the administration until the arrival of the French Protectorate. An exhaustive study of the Turkish loanwords in Moroccan dialects has been made by Procházka: some examples are: *bāša* (< *paša*) ‘pasha’, *būḡāz* (< *boğaz*) ‘strait’, *duḡri* (< *doğru*) ‘straight’, *səbsi* (< *sipsi*), ‘whistle, boatswain’s pipe’, *šānṭa* (< *çanta*) ‘bag’, *šawš* (< *çavuş*) ‘kind of page or messenger (as between offices)’, *ṭubži* (< *topçu*) ‘gunner’ (Procházka 2012).

### 2.10.3 FRENCH

From the nineteenth century onwards French exerted a great influence in all North African dialects and continues to do so up to the present day. This strong French influence, which leads Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisians to the practice of code-switching between their dialects and French, is one of the most salient features of the linguistic situation of the Maghreb and had (until very recently) no equivalent in the countries of the Mashreq. Especially strong was the impact of the French language in Algeria, a country which was under direct French rule between 1830 and 1962 (from 1847 onwards not as a colony but as a part of metropolitan France, divided into several *départements*). Algeria lost all its traditional institutions and numerous French colonists settled there.<sup>78</sup> This brought about a French acculturation process, and the spread of French reached levels not found in other North African regions.

<sup>77</sup> In many Moroccan dialects *maftāḥ(a)*—the Arabic word for ‘key’—means ‘needle’ and is used as a euphemism instead of *ibra* / *yibra* (because to mention sharp objects is a bad omen).

<sup>78</sup> In 1948 there were 876,785 French nationals living in Algeria and 45,586 Europeans from other countries (mainly Spanish), out of a total population of 8,681,785 (Despois 1960 1: 370).

Matters were different in Morocco, a country which was never a colony and where the French-Spanish Protectorate lasted only from 1912 to 1956.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, by virtue of its juridical status the Protectorate allowed a certain degree of autonomy to the Moroccans, especially regarding education and some of their traditional institutions. The number of French colonists in Morocco was never as high as that in Algeria.<sup>80</sup> The situation was similar in Tunisia, a French Protectorate from 1881 to 1956.

French loanwords are innumerable in all the Arabic dialects from Tunisia to Mauritania, especially in technical domains. Some automobile-related examples from Morocco are (Aguadé 1996b): *ḥāṣṣūk* (< Fr. *pare-chocs*) 'bumper', *lāṣūrānṣ* (< Fr. *l'assurance*) 'insurance policy', *ḍīmārūr* (< Fr. *démarrreur*) 'starter', *frān* (< Fr. *frein*) 'brake'.

#### 2.10.4 SPANISH

After the defeat of the Almohads in the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), whose immediate consequence was the rapid progress of the *Reconquista*, there began a constant exodus of Andalusians to North Africa and the Middle East. In this manner, Andalusian Arabic lexical items (often of Latin origin) entered the Arabic dialects of North Africa. Spanish loanwords came to North Africa—particularly to Morocco—when in 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain, and Granada, the last Islamic kingdom in the Iberian Peninsula, finally fell. This caused a massive emigration of Spanish Muslims. The final expulsion of the Moriscos in the years 1609 and 1613—they were forced to emigrate to Tunis, Algeria and Morocco—generated a very important increase of Spanish loanwords due to the fact that the majority of the Moriscos had lost their Andalusian Arabic dialect and spoke only Spanish or Catalan.

In cases such as *māṭīṣa* 'tomatoes' (< Sp. *tomates*) the realization of Spanish /s/ as /š/ shows that this loan came to Morocco by means of the Moriscos, whose speech was precisely characterized by the shift /s/ > /š/.<sup>81</sup> The same is probably the case with *šālya* 'chair' (< Sp. *silla*) where the shift Spanish /s/ > Moroccan /š/ also speaks of its Morisco origin.

In the seventeenth century the French captive Germain Moüette, who lived in Tetouan, wrote his *Relation*, in which he comments that the majority of the inhabitants of this town were Moriscos and Jews expelled from Spain (Moüette 1683: 156). According to the same author, the use of Spanish was quite common in Morocco (Moüette 1683: iii). Before 1912 the town of Casablanca played an important role in the introduction of Spanish loans into the Moroccan dialects: from 1904, the majority (two thirds) of the Europeans dwelling in this town were of Spanish origin.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> In some regions of southern Morocco, French colonial rule was not effectively imposed until the 1930s. Thus the French Protectorate lasted there for only about twenty-five years.

<sup>80</sup> According to the census of 1952 the total population of the French zone numbered 9,368,702, of whom 362,814 were Europeans, the majority of them of French origin (Lévi-Provençal and Colin 1986: 1196).

<sup>81</sup> Sp. *tomate* is in turn a loanword from the Nahuatl *tomatl* (first documented in Spain in a book published in 1560, before the expulsion of the Moriscos).

<sup>82</sup> Miège and Hugues 1954: 33–4 (400 Spaniards in 1904 and 767 in 1907: Casablanca had a population of 24,000 persons in 1905).

Between 1912 and 1956 Morocco was divided into two Protectorates: the Spanish in the north and the French in the south and the east. As a result of this political division modern Spanish loanwords are obviously more frequent in the north than in the territories under French dominion. The following Spanish and French loanwords in the dialects of Tangier and Casablanca provide examples (Table 2.4).

**TABLE 2.4 French and Spanish loan words in the dialects of Tangiers and Casablanca**

Tangier	Casablanca
<i>grīfu</i> ‘water tap’ <sup>83</sup>	<i>bəzbūz</i>
<i>nībīra</i> ‘icebox’ <sup>84</sup>	<i>təllāža ~ frižidīr</i> <sup>85</sup>
<i>trāmbiyya</i> ‘bus’ <sup>86</sup>	<i>ṭobīs</i> <sup>87</sup>
<i>numātiko</i> ‘tire’ <sup>88</sup>	<i>bnu</i> <sup>89</sup>

In the case of Tunisia, the Spanish occupation of Tunis, Mahdia, and Djerba (from 1535 to 1574) probably had little impact on the Tunisian dialects. Spanish loanwords came with the Moriscos, who settled in great number in different Tunisian localities after their expulsion from Spain in the sixteenth and at the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.<sup>90</sup> In several Tunisian villages, Spanish was spoken right up until the eighteenth century and some Spanish family names can today still be found in Tunisia, such as Blānku (< *Blanco*), Katalān (< *Catalán*), Šānšu (< *Sancho*), or Nīgru (< *Negro*) (Baccouche 2000: 658; 2009: 573–4).

### 2.10.5 ITALIAN IN TUNISIA AND LIBYA

A hallmark of Tunisian and Libyan dialects is the occurrence of numerous loanwords from Italian. A wave of immigration from Italy to Tunisia began in the nineteenth century (particularly after the establishment of the French Protectorate) with the result that by 1926 the number of Italian colonists (90,000) exceeded that of the French (Baccouche 2000: 658). As a result of this immigration, a great number of Italian loanwords (several hundred terms) entered the Tunisian dialects. For instance: *batriyya* (< It. *batteria*) ‘battery’, *birra* (< *birra*) ‘beer’, *kimbyāl* (< *cambiale*) ‘bill of exchange’, *fabrika* (< *fabbrica*) ‘factory’, *fālsu* (< *falso*) ‘false’, *farīna* (< *farina*) ‘flour’, *fatūra* (< *fattura*) ‘invoice’, *makarūna* (< *maccheroni*) ‘macaroni’, *makīna* (< *macchina*) ‘machine’, *bāku* (< *pacco*) ‘package’, *rigūta* (< *ricotta*) ‘ricotta cheese’ (Baccouche 2009: 574).

<sup>83</sup> Sp. *grifo*. <sup>84</sup> Sp. *nevera*. <sup>85</sup> Fr. *frigidaire*. <sup>86</sup> Sp. *tranvía* < Eng. *tramway*.

<sup>87</sup> Fr. *autobus*. <sup>88</sup> Sp. *neumático*. <sup>89</sup> Fr. *pneu*.

<sup>90</sup> On the diaspora of the Moriscos (in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) cf. García-Arenal and Wiegers 2014.

## 2.10.6 SUB-SAHARAN LANGUAGES

The continuous contacts over many centuries between the countries of the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa (chiefly via trade and military expeditions) resulted in migrations of speakers of different sub-Saharan languages from the Sahel to North Africa. In particular, the slave trade and the subsequent development of black praetorian guards (especially in Morocco after the sixteenth century), played a prominent role in this human transfer. About 5,000 slaves per year reached the Maghreb and it is attested that some ex-slaves around Timimoun (Algeria) spoke Bambara into the twentieth century, while a Songhay language (Korandjé) became predominant in the oasis of Tabelbala in Algeria (Souag 2013: 211). However, in spite of the great number of slaves from the Sahel zone brought to the Maghreb over the centuries, the number of loans from sub-Saharan languages adopted by North African Arabic dialects is extremely limited, owing both to the low social prestige of these slaves and to their rapid acculturation into the Arabic-speaking environment. Some examples are:

- *kābūya* / *kābu* ‘pumpkin’ in Libya (Fezzan), Tunisia (Nafzāwa, Marāzīg, Sfax, Takrouna), and Algeria (Sidi Bel Abbes), from Hausa *kābēwā* (Souag 2013: 2013–15). See also WAD I: 478 (map 163).
- *ṭānga* ‘earring’ in Morocco, from Wolof *tank* (de Prémare 8: 246).
- *ṣaṭṭa* ‘Cayenne pepper’ in Libya (Benghazi), from Hausa *cittā* (Souag 2013: 216).
- *gaḫūli* ‘sorghum / maize’ in Libya (Fezzan, Tripolitania), from Kanuri *ngavēli* (Souag 2013: 215).

Slaves from the Sahel founded tentacular brotherhoods covering the whole of the Maghreb (called *gnāwa* in Morocco and Algeria,<sup>91</sup> *ṣtambēli* in Tunisia<sup>92</sup>) and even today they perform healing rituals with music accompanied by songs in whose texts we find the presence of words of sub-Saharan origin. One of their musical instruments is a big drum called a *gānga* (< Hausa *gàngā*, Kanuri *gangá*), a widespread word present in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco (Souag 2013: 196–8). In Mauritania Ḥassāniyya has numerous loans from sub-Saharan languages, as might be expected of an Arabic dialect located in the Sahel zone. Some Wolof loanwords in Ḥassāniyya are for instance: *māru* ‘rice’ (< *mālo*), *kaddu* ‘spoon’ (< *kuddu*), *kaḫba* (< *kalpe*) ‘purse, wallet’. Cf. respectively WAD I: 476; II: 134, 184.

<sup>91</sup> From Berber *ignawən* ‘dumbs’ (owing to the fact that they spoke unintelligible languages: cf. Colin 1954–7: 94–5). This term (written *qināwa*) is already mentioned in al-Andalus in the twelfth century by the poet Ibn Quzmān.

<sup>92</sup> A folk etymology links this term to Istanbul. But probably it comes from Hausa *sambalē* ‘a dance of youth and maidens’ (Souag 2013: 224).

# The formation of the Egyptian Arabic dialect area

PETER BEHNSTEDT AND MANFRED WOIDICH

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Egypt displays a considerable degree of dialectal diversity with, on the one hand, ‘sedentary’ dialects very similar to the standard dialect of Cairo, as in the central Nile Delta, and on the other, very different ‘bedouin’ dialects in Sinai and on the Mediterranean coast west of Alexandria up to the Libyan border.<sup>1</sup> There are ‘sedentary’ dialects with different amounts of Maghrebi admixture according to the area: in the western Delta, the northern oases, and Upper Egypt south of Asyut. Furthermore, there are dialects in the eastern Delta related to those of Sinai and Palestine (de Jong 2000: 622), in central and southern Egypt dialects related to Ḥijāzī Arabic (Reichmuth 1983: 28ff.), and, further south, to Sudanese Arabic (de Jong 2002: 358). Egypt can thus be seen as a transitional area between eastern and western Arabic. It has, however, its own special characteristics and is not merely a collection of elements from the east and the west (Map 3.1).

The formation of the Egyptian Arabic (EA) dialect area involved several linguistic layers and the immigration of different Arab tribes over the course of history, but also the forced resettlement of bedouin from one province to another, which led to dialect contact in many regions. There is no evidence, however, anywhere in Egypt, for processes of pidginization and creolization. For the role of substrata see §3.9.

Fortunately, the history of the settlement of Arab tribes in Egypt after the conquest in the seventh century AD is rather well documented and starts early with Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s (d. 871) *Futūḥ*, then Al-Kindī’s (d. 961) *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, and

<sup>1</sup> In what follows we shall deal only with the dialects spoken by the sedentary population in the Nile Delta, the Nile Valley, and the Western Oases. Our topic is not the often discussed language switch from Coptic to Arabic, nor the date of the extinction of Coptic. At least for the tenth century Al-Muqaddasī, *Kitāb Aḥsan at-Taqāsīm* 203, 5 (completed 955) states for Egypt: *ḍimmatuhum yataḥaddathūna bi l-qibṭiyya* (‘Their protected peoples (i.e. Christians) speak Coptic’) (Fück 1950: 108). For a thorough discussion now, see Mikhail 2014. For an overview of the Egyptian dialect areas see Map 3.1.

later with Al-Maqrīzī's (d. 1442) *Khiṭaṭ*, as well as other medieval historians, such as Al-Taghribirdi and Al-Qalqashandī.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.1.1 THE FIRST LAYER

Our claim is that the dialects spoken in the northern part of Egypt, i.e. in the Delta and the Nile Valley as far south as El Minya, represent the earliest linguistic stratum. The vast majority of the tribes which settled in this region were of south Arabian or Yemeni extraction.

Of these, Azd, Ḥimyar, including Maʿāfir, Kinda, including Tujib, and Lakhm seem to have been the most important. Members of these tribes formed the *ḡund* ('soldiery') of Egypt. They were to dominate the political and intellectual life of Muslim Egypt for the first two Islamic centuries, and it was from their ranks that the *wuḡūh* ('elite') were drawn. By contrast, the north Arabian (Qays) bedouin, so powerful in Syria, were hardly represented in Egypt at all.

Kennedy 1998: 64, and see also Magidow 2013: 212.

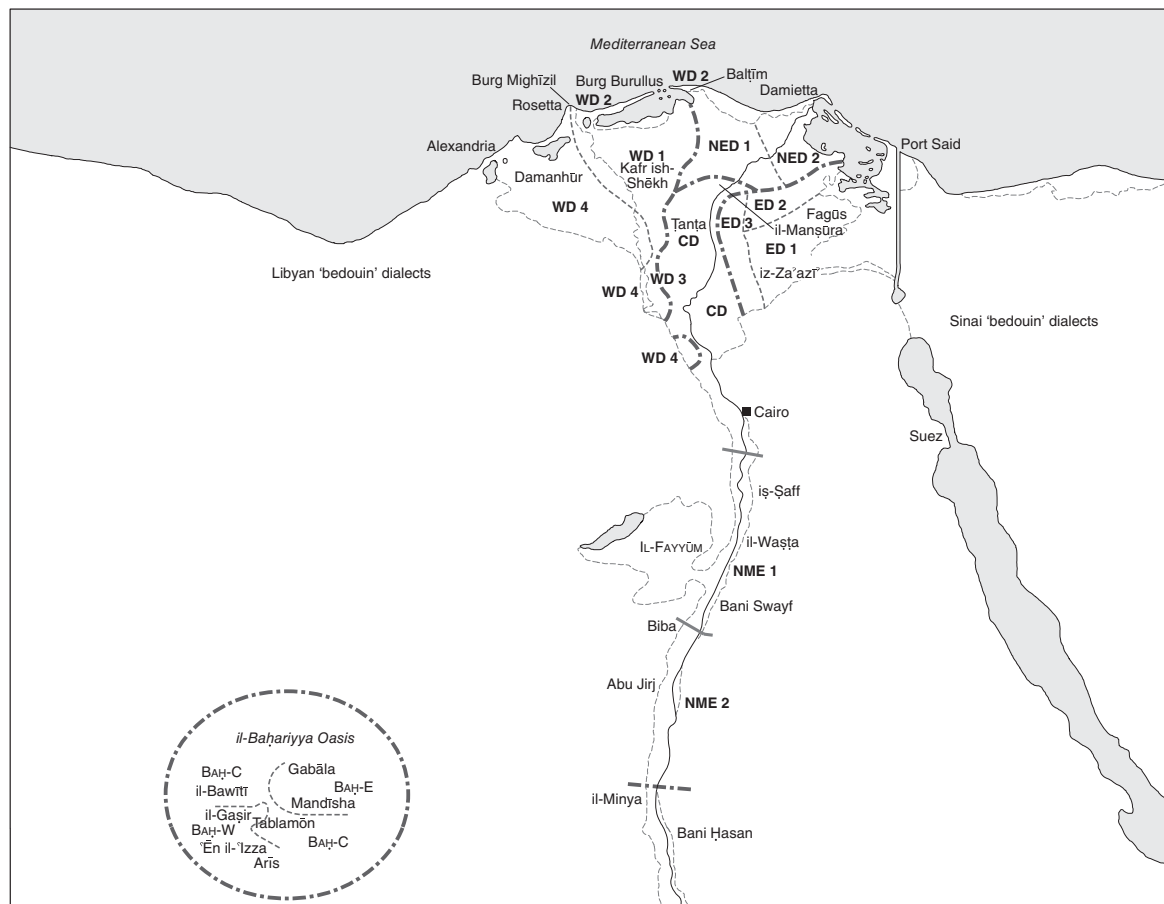
According to Kennedy (1981: 32), north Arabian tribes in Egypt were 'almost entirely urban and confined to the cities of Alexandria and Fustāṭ. The affairs of the province were dominated by a few families of Yamanī origin, Khawlānīs, Tujībīs, Ḥaḍramīs, and Kindīs whom Al-Kindī refers to as the *wuḡūh*, the elite, of the province.' In the same vein, in the field of jurisdiction, see Tillier 2011: 2. This does not mean that at this period there were no or few linguistic contacts between Arabic speakers and the rural Coptic population. One has to keep in mind that every spring the tribes went to their *murtabaʿāt* ('spring pastures') for some months, and that some of them certainly stayed there for good, e.g. the Murād, who are mentioned as having settled in Atrīb<sup>3</sup> in the middle of the eighth century (Khurshīd 1992: 215) and in Rosetta (Khurshīd 1992: 215, 220) (Map 3.2). For other settlements south of Fustāṭ see §3.5.

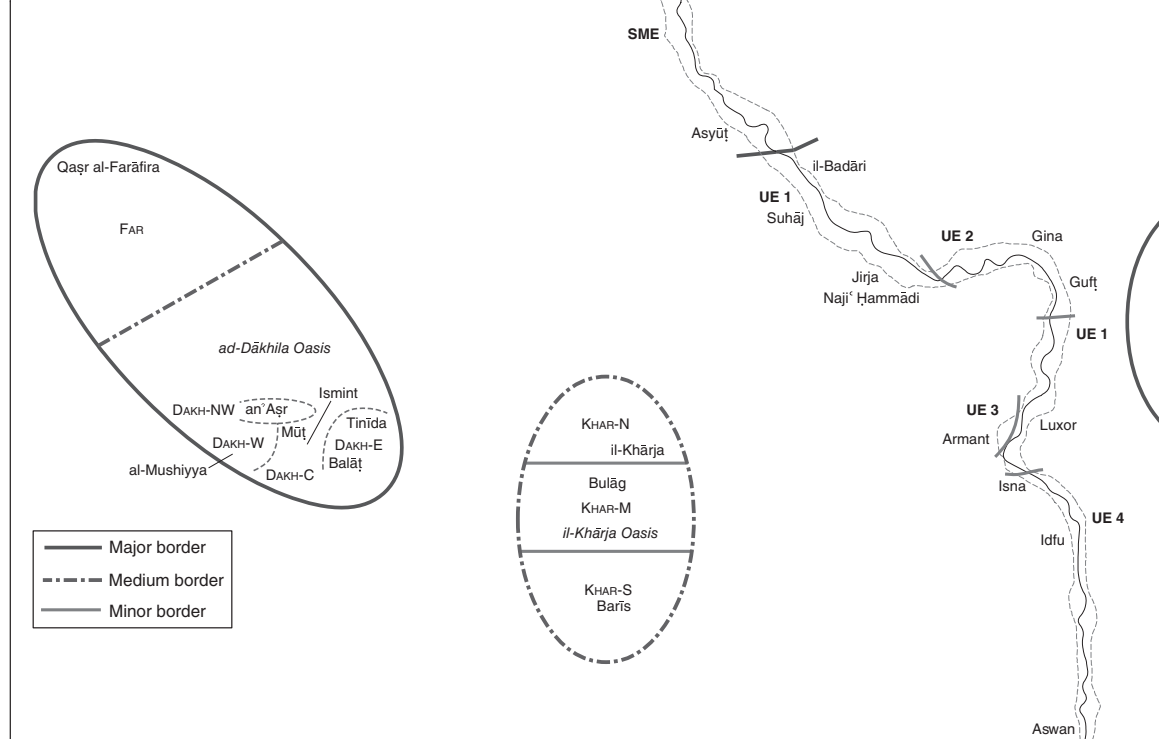
Some of those Yemeni tribes, however, are said to be 'pseudo-Yemenites', i.e. claiming Yemeni descent, but belonging in reality to the Arabs from the north. In particular, the genealogy of the Quḍāʿa federation, of which the main tribes were the Balī, the Juhayna, Ḥassān, Jarm, and Kalb, was invented in Umayyad times during the conflict between the Qays and the Kalb. The Quḍāʿa were considered Yemenis, but whether they really were is doubtful: they were driven into the arms of the Yemeni party because of their enmity towards the Qays (Wellhausen 1902: 45). Al-Ṭabarī (III: 570) designates them, along with the allegedly south Arabian Lakhm and Judhām, as *mustaʿriba*, i.e., northern Arabs<sup>4</sup> (see Map 3.2). Amongst the important tribes of the 'true' Yemenis, the number of the ʿAkk is estimated to have been 3,500–4,000 warriors, and according to Al-Kindī (1912: 5) the Tujīb (Kinda) represented 'one of the principal elements of the Arab population of Egypt in the next

<sup>2</sup> Information found in dictionaries on the Arab tribes of Egypt, e.g. Khurshīd 1992, or in the Egyptian onomastical dictionary (Ramzī 1953–8) mostly derives from these primary sources.

<sup>3</sup> 3 kilometres north of today's Banha in the Delta.

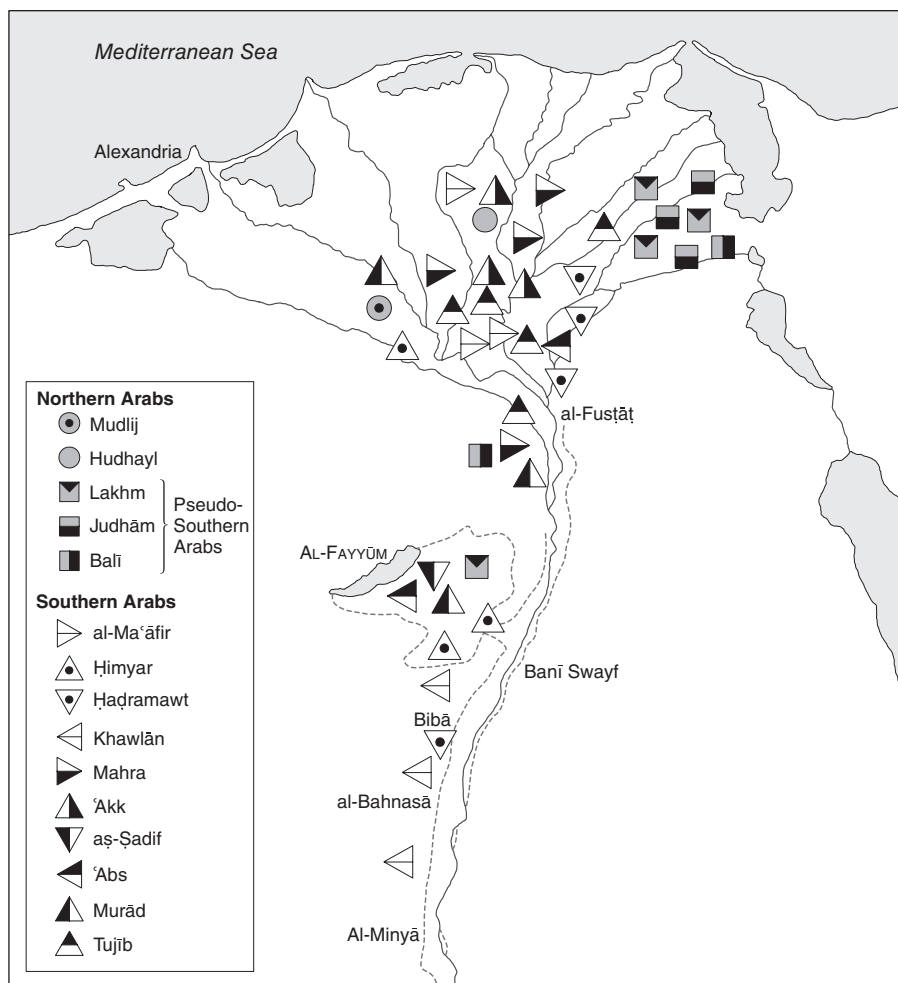
<sup>4</sup> The term Yemeni, therefore, should be understood as a political affiliation rather than an ethnic or tribal designation.





MAP 3.1 The Egyptian Arabic dialect area today





MAP 3.2 Spring pastures of the tribes in immediate post-conquest Egypt

three centuries'.<sup>5</sup> Amongst the personalities Al-Kindī mentions for this period, there are twenty-eight with the *nisba* 'al-Tujībī' and even more with 'al-Ḥaḍramī'.

Immigration did not stop with the conquest, but continued, as friends and relatives were attracted to the newly conquered regions and settled down there (Kennedy 1998: 64). By the end of the tenth century, however, the Yemenis had

<sup>5</sup> The total Arab population in Egypt at that time is estimated to have been no more than '40,000 men and their families, say a total Arab immigration of around 100,000 souls.' (Kennedy 2007: 147). Further, (Kennedy 2007: 162), referring to Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam (1974: 102), reports that in the *dīwān* 40,000 men were registered, but the question is whether the number '40' can be taken literally here. For the year 750, Raymond (2001: 18ff.), based on Gayraud (1991: 83, n. 27), estimates the number of Arabs living in al-Fuṣṭāṭ at 200,000, whereas Kubiak (1987: 80–3, 131) includes in this figure the non-Arabs as well.

left al-Fuṣṭāṭ for Ifrīqiyyā (Ibn Ḥawqal 1964: 144–5) and are not mentioned in later sources. This does not necessarily mean that all of them left; some of the settled clans engaged in farming may have remained on their estates instead of risking an unknown future. Anyhow, the presence of Yemenis is attested for the duration of three centuries.

As for the oases, an early, common, and very conservative linguistic stratum can be similarly postulated (Souag 2009: 54; Behnstedt 1998; Woidich 1993), including an early layer with a uvular /q/ judging from the Arabic loans in Siwi Berber (Souag 2009: 54), but unfortunately we know nothing about the Arab tribes which settled there before the tenth century (Décobert 1982).

### 3.1.2 DIALECT

Are there any linguistic data which corroborate ‘a Yemeni origin of the modern Egyptian dialect’ (Magidow 2013: 212)? Linguistic evidence shows that, apart from the Sharqiyya province, northern Egyptian dialects have a number of phonological features in common with many Yemeni dialects:

- (a) There is evidence that the pronunciation of *ġīm* as [g] in the central part of the Delta and the north of the Nile Valley (Fayyūm, Banī Swayf), and in parts of Dakhla is old and not an innovation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as postulated by Blanc (1981) – see Woidich and Zack 2009 and Zack 2009: 84–9. But this is not necessarily a south Arabian feature: thus Krenkow in *El*<sup>1</sup> 1007ff. s.v. Khazraj:

Die übereinstimmende Feststellung der Genealogen und arabischen Altertumsforscher besagt, dass die Khazraj zusammen mit den Aws und den Ḥassāniden in Syrien in sehr früher Zeit aus Südarabien ausgewandert sind (The common assessment of the genealogists and researchers into early Arab history is that the Khazraj, the Aws, and the Ḥassānis of Syria moved out of southern Arabia at a very early point)

and

Wenn man die Menge der Einwanderer von al-Madīna und Südarabien nach Ägypten in Betracht zieht, so darf man wohl mit grosser Wahrscheinlichkeit annehmen, dass die Sprache der Khazraj wegen ihres südarabischen Ursprungs den arabischen Dialekt in Ägypten beeinflusst hat, und dass sie im Gegensatz zu den Ostarabern den Buchstaben *ḡīm* hart, wie g, ausgesprochen haben (If one takes into account the mass of incomers to Egypt from al-Madīna and southern Arabia, one may assume the great probability that the language of the Khazraj, because of its south Arabian origin, influenced the Egyptian dialect of Arabic, and that, in contrast to the eastern Arabs, it had a hard pronunciation, like /g/, of the letter *ġīm*)

Krenkow *El*<sup>1</sup>: 1008a.

/g/ is the Old Semitic pronunciation, and at the time of the conquest it must have been extant in other Arabic dialects<sup>6</sup> as clearly signalled by loans from Arabic into

<sup>6</sup> Attested for Aden in the tenth century, see Fück 1950: 108 referring to Al-Muqaddasī, *Kitāb Aḥṣan at-Taqāsīm* (completed 955): *wa yaḡʿalūn al-ġīm kāfan fa-yaqūlūn li-raḡab rakab wa li-raḡul rakul* (‘they

Neo-western Aramaic with /g/ as in *farraġ* ‘to behold’, *ġmōʿča* ‘people’ versus more recent loans such as *žayša* ~ *jayša* ‘army’ (Arnold and Behnstedt 1993: 53; Woidich and Zack 2009). As for the Yemen, /g/ < \*g is common today in the south (see map 2 in Behnstedt (1985))<sup>7</sup>.

- (b) As for the /q/ reflex of OA \*q, in the Delta it is attested in isolated areas on the Mediterranean coast (Rosetta, Baltīm, see B&W 1985b, map 7), in the oases of the Western Desert<sup>8</sup> and, in addition, it is reported at the end of the nineteenth century for the Fayyūm and Bani Swayf areas south of Cairo.<sup>9</sup> This fits nicely into general dialect-geography theory, with the older variant on the fringes of a large area (Bartoli’s ‘areal norm 1’). It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that /q/ was more widespread in earlier times, a view which is corroborated by the fact that early Arabic loans in the Berber of Siwa and Awdjila (Libya) equally show /q/ (Souag 2009: 54). Probably, in the Middle Ages, older /q/ was replaced in the central Delta by /ʔ/ starting from Cairo and following the trade route along the eastern branch of the Nile. In the west and the east, on the other hand, it was replaced by /g/ owing to a process of bedouinization (see B&W 2005: 158, map 70; Woidich 1996: 346). As for the Yemeni Tihāmah, apart from the extreme north, /q/ is still the usual pronunciation there, as well as in al-Ḥugariyyah and adjacent areas down to Aden (Behnstedt 1985, map 1; Vanhove 2009: 753).
- (c) The vowel system, too, shows conservative features with a system of three short vowels /a/, /i/, and /u/, which Egypt shares *inter alia* with Yemen (Jastrow 1982: 130).
- (d) Many parts of rural Egypt (the western Delta, northern Delta, Middle Egypt, oases) display a very conservative syllable structure with no elisions of high short vowels in open unstressed syllables before (-)Cv̄/Cv: *kibīr* ‘big’, *ḥumār* ‘donkey’, *libisit* ‘she dressed’, *wisixa* ‘dirty (f)’ (see map 62 in B&W 1985b and

pronounce the *ġīm* as a *kāf* and say *rakab* [i.e. *ragab*] instead of *raġab* and *rakul* [i.e. *ragul*] instead of *raġul*) (De Goeje in Al-Muqaddasī 1885: 96). We share the view expressed by Corriente ‘the coexistence of both realizations of /g/, obstruant and affricate, from the very beginnings’ in Egypt (Corriente 2011: 43, n. 12). In the same vein, in the nineteenth century Spitta writes on the typical inhabitant of the Nile valley: ‘He always has the hard (‘trocken’) pronunciation, which he probably owes to his ancestors from Yemen and Najd’ (Spitta-Bey 1880: 5), see further n. 1 there with references to the *lahn*-literature.

<sup>7</sup> For further reports on [g] in older sources for the Jawf and the Bani Ḥarb between Mecca and Medina see Landberg 1909: 806, n. 1 and 353, n. 4 (not in Cantineau 1960: 58ff.). For the ‘Anezeh tribe see the statement by Wetzstein (1868: 163): ‘All the tribes of ‘Anezeh pronounce the *ġīm* with a hard g like the Saxon pronunciation of g in “Gabe”. Its accuracy, however, is called into doubt in Landberg 1913: XII, in contrast to Socin (1901 III: 193 §161), who also describes the sound of the letter *ġīm* ‘as a voiced g’.

<sup>8</sup> See B&W 1982: 42. Strangely enough, Vollers attributes /q/ to the bedouin, but in the correct areas: ‘.../q/ has been preserved here and there in Egypt, especially by the bedouin’ (Vollers 1890: 7) and more explicitly ‘still survives here and there among the bedouin near Lake Burullus in the Province of Gharbiyya, and in the Fayyūm’ (Vollers 1895: 10).

<sup>9</sup> Taymūr 1971: 74; Al-Ḍasūqī 1920: 58; Vollers 1895: 10. In the oases /q/ appears as a glottalized [qʔ] as in [qʔulla] ‘water bottle’ (Kharga). [qʔ] means here that ‘the glottal stop and oral stop are simultaneous’ (Catford 1988: 101), not that it is ejective. For glottalized /q/ elsewhere in the Arab world see Cantineau 1960: 68.

maps 29/30 in B&W 2005: 99–100), with the oases Farafra and Dakhla having no elisions of this type even after (-)Cv̄ as in *kāmila* ‘complete (f)’, versus *kāmila* ~ *kamla* for the rest of Egypt. We find similar forms in Yemen (Behnstedt 1985: 53, 54, maps 13, 14; Werbeck 2001: 56 (*yiʿālīḡuh* 59)) and Oman.

- (e) Consonant clusters are treated the same way in both areas: *kulli ḥāga* ‘everything’, *bintina* ‘our daughter’, i.e. insertion before the third consonant in a cluster -CC\_C(C).
- (f) /r, l, m, n/ in -CR# in Lower Egypt (except Sharqiyya) are realized voiceless in pause as in Yemen (Werbeck 2001: 46).
- (g) The typical stress pattern *madrāsa* of Lower Egypt occurs in large parts of Yemen also: *ʿandīna*, *kullūhum*.

The only reasonable conclusion that can be drawn from these shared phonological features is that both dialect areas are very conservative. More decisive evidence for an early Egypt–Yemen connection, therefore, should be sought in either morphological or lexical features:

- (h) Short forms of the demonstratives (*da* – *di* – *dōl*) are typical of EA and can equally be found in the Yemeni Tihāmah (*ḏā* – *ḏī*, *ḏā* – *ḏih*, and others). As for the plurals, *ḏayla*, *ḏēla* without gender distinction predominate in the Tihāmah, whereas *ḏawlih*, *ḏōlah* are quite common in the south-west of Saudi Arabia (Prochazka 1988b: 45). Gender distinction as in *ḏawla* (m) – *ḏayla* (f) is sporadically attested. This fits in very well with the historical fact that the army led by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to Egypt consisted initially of up to 4,000 men, mainly from the tribe of ʿAkk, who lived in Yemen in the villages of the Tihāma plain, see Kennedy 2007: 147.
- (i) Prochazka (1988b: 45) also mentions *ḏākah* (< \*ḏākhah?), *ḏīkah* (< \*ḏīkhah) referring to distant objects, forms which remind one of the *dukha*, *dikha* forms of EA. According to Magidow (2013: 423) ‘Dialects which have reallocated \*ḏawla and \*ḏayla to mark masculine and feminine plurals respectively ... probably arose in north-western Yemen. They are primarily attested in the Nile Valley’. The question why all over Egypt short forms are used need not necessarily be answered by the spreading of northern forms down to the south, since short forms (alongside long forms of the type *hāḏa*) are also used in the Ḥijāz (see B&W 2005, map 54, 144; for the dialect of the Ḥarb, see Al-Hazmy: 143). As will be seen later, Middle and Upper Egypt dialects show important Ḥijāzī elements,<sup>10</sup> so the short forms in those dialects may be explained as a Ḥijāzī contribution.

As for lexicon, contemporary Egyptian Arabic dialects and Yemeni dialects differ considerably, and only a few correspondences have been found so far. Just to give some examples of diverging designations: ‘a bride’ is *ʿarūs(a)* in most Arabic dialects, but *ḥariweh* in Yemen. The names of many animals differ completely, e.g.

<sup>10</sup> SME mainly ‘sedentary’ Ḥijāzī elements, UE4 ‘bedouin’ features also.

‘mouse’: Egyptian *fār* versus Yemeni *ʿakbarī*, *ʿaḍalī*; ‘cat’: Egyptian *ʿuṭṭ*, *biss* versus Yemeni *dimmi*, *ʿirri*, *ʿusān*, and others. There are two neat correspondences in agricultural terminology,<sup>11</sup> namely the designations of a ‘threshing place’, for which the *Lisān al-ʿArab* offers *ḡarīn* as a Yemeni form (today used in south-western Saudi Arabia, and not Yemen)<sup>12</sup> and *ḡurn* as an Egyptian form (also known in Yemen besides *miḡrān* and similar forms). As for ‘yoke’, in the Fayyūm *ḍand* (root *ḍ-m-d*) is used. Similar forms are attested in Yemen, such as *ḍumād*, *miḍmad*, and also in Maghrebi dialects, but nowhere else (B&W 2005: 28–9). Certainly, modern EA shares more items with Levantine Arabic than with any other Arabic dialect region, but many of these go back to much later contacts in Mameluke and Ottoman times (Lentin 1995: 134).

## 3.2 THE EASTERN DELTA

### 3.2.1 HISTORY

A first presence of Arabs in parts of the eastern Delta is attested in pre-Islamic times. The partial Arabization of the eastern Delta around AD 400 is mentioned in the ‘peregrinatio Egeriae’, where a nun (Egeria or Aetheria), who was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, came to a town ‘quae appellatur Arabia, quae civitas in terra Gesse est, nam inde ipsum territorium sic appellatur, id est terra Arabiae’<sup>13</sup> (Aquitana and Fischer 1986: 13), also ‘known as the Arabian Nome, several centuries before the Arab conquest of Egypt’ (Awad 1954: 244). Of those early Arabs, the Ghassān tribe is known to have been in Sinai and the northern Sharqiyya from the third and fourth centuries, followed by other Christian Ghassān who sought refuge there and who, according to Al-Wāqidī 1825: 19–36, 66, 133–4, quoted in ʿAmmar 1944 I: 23, were granted tenure of the area of Ṣān il-Ḥajar by the Byzantine governor. Lakhm and Judhām are also mentioned there (ʿAmmar 1944 I: 21–2). Later, at the time of the conquest, only northern tribes settled there,<sup>14</sup> and during the first Coptic revolt more Levantine Arabs were settled there to strengthen the Arab element (namely, the Qays in the al-Ḥawf al-Sharqī region of Bilbēs) in AD 725, cf. Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* I: 80 *ḍikru nuzūli l-ʿarabi bi-rifī Miṣra wa ttiṣāḍihim az-zarʿa maʿāṣān* (‘Account

<sup>11</sup> Which is rather stable through the ages, cf. the forms for ‘yoke’ in European languages.

<sup>12</sup> Magidow (2013: 434) ‘...it’s important to understand that in early Islamic sources, Yaman simply referred to much of western Arabia south of Mecca, often meaning those areas outside the control of the Byzantines’.

<sup>13</sup> It is the vanished Ṭar(r)ābiyya or Ṭar(r)āfiyya or Arabia (Ramzī 1953 I: 310).

<sup>14</sup> Judging from the fact that the Balī helped the Byzantine general Heraclius fight the invading Muslim armies in the Negev and in Egypt (*Ṭarikh* III: 107, IV: 136), we may assume that they were living in these areas prior to Islam. As to Judhām, we are merely told that it was ‘the first tribe to join ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ in the conquest of Egypt’ (*Nihāya*: 193; Bailey 1985: 21, n. 4). Holes (2004a: 21) speaks of a ‘creeping process of Arabization through the migration of disparate tribal elements from the peninsula’ before Islam, likewise Holes (2004a: 35). But the role of these pre-conquest contacts should not be exaggerated (Holes 2004a: 36).

of the settlement of the Arabs in the Egyptian countryside and their adoption of agriculture as a way of life'). Their number is indicated to have been 5,000. From then on, through the centuries, a continuous influx of tribes from the east is attested, among them the Judhām in the twelfth century with several land tenures (Al-Maqrīzī, *Bayān*: 23).<sup>15</sup> In 1181, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn settled the Jarm and Thaʿlaba from Palestine and Sinai (Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* I: 71, Kaḥḥāla 1949 I: 182) in the Sharqīyya. They are mentioned in the subsequent centuries, e.g. in 1348, when together with the ʿĀyid they rebelled against the central power (Al-Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* X: 233) and in 1510 when a rebellious Thaʿlabī called ʿUmar b. Mūsā al-Nafʿī was hanged (Ibn Iyās 1960 I: 188). The ʿĀyid (a *baṭn* of the Judhām) are mentioned in Al-Taghribirdī, (*Nujūm* X: 233) in 1348, by Al-Qalqashandī, (*Nihāya*: 333), and also by Kaḥḥāla (1949 II: 715), Ibn Khaldūn (*Ibar* V: 7), and Al-Ṭayyib (1993) for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They came from Sinai and settled around 1400 between Bilbēs and ʿAqaba and formed a kind of aristocracy in the region (ʿAmmār 1944 I: 34). The villages Kufūr ʿĀyid (Ramzī II/1: 162) and Kafr Ibrāhīm al-ʿĀyidi (Ramzī II/1: 103) still bear their name. Abul-Fadl (1961: 2ff.) dates their settlement in the Sharqīyya, at the instance of Sultan Baibars, between 1454 and 1471. Another *baṭn* ('subtribe') of the Judhām, the Banī Baqar, is mentioned in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, e.g. in 1480 a certain Qāsim b. Baqar, *ʿamīr ʿurbān Juḍām bi l-Šarqīyya* ('ruler of the Judhām Arabs of the eastern region') (Ibn Iyās III: 164); another, Sheikh ʿAbd al-Dāʾim b. al-ʿAmīr ʿAḥmad b. Baqar who was caught in 1507 after a rebellion; and another, ʿAmīr ʿAḥmad b. Baqar in 1521 (Ibn Iyās IV: 145).

Halm (1979: 596) reports that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the *ʿiqṭāʿ*s ('grants of land') were given increasingly to immigrant bedouin tribes. As the available land registers indicate, the number of *ʿiqṭāʿ*s increased considerably from the time of Qāyt Bay to the time of al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (see map 552 in B&W 1985b and map 47 in B&W 2005: 138). As to haematography, see maps 48 and 49 in B&W 2005: 140 based on ʿAmmār (1944 I: 19), who found that blood group 'O' is most prevalent where the 'Arab element' (in his words) is strongest. In contrast to the western Delta, there are a considerable number of bedouin-type place names such as 'Banī X', 'al-CaCāCiCa' to be found in the Sharqīyya (see B&W 2005: 166–7, maps 75, 76).

### 3.2.2 DIALECT

Abul-Fadl (1961: 5) distinguishes two dialectal areas, one 'related to the Cairo dialect' and another 'close to bedouin dialects and Syro-Palestinian', with a transitional area in between. For a more refined analysis see B&W 1985a, b.

<sup>15</sup> The importance of the Judhām is evidenced by the fact that we have more details about their settlements than those of any other tribe. Al-Qalqashandī mentions fifty-two different *buṭūn* of this tribe.

Of course there is a stock of common Egyptian features in the Sharqiyya, such as: no interdental; no ‘gahawa-syndrome’; only sporadic use of fpl forms;<sup>16</sup> short forms of the demonstratives; lexical terms such as *innahaṛḍa* ‘today’, ‘āyiz ‘to want’, *idda* ‘to give’, *hāḡa* ‘something’.

Amongst the eastern features which we consider a second stratum, one may count the unconditioned affrication of \*k to č mainly in ED2 (*ič-čalbi čal ič-čišč* versus *yākul, kōm*) as in Palestinian rural dialects but not in Sinai dialects. In the eastern part of the Sharqiyya, we have the *mádrasa*-type accent as generally in Levantine Arabic (Abul-Fadl 1961: 322).<sup>17</sup> The syllable structure corresponds essentially to that of Syro-Palestinian dialects with vowel elisions such as \*silāḥ > (i)slāḥ; insertions of the type *yíkitbu, kalib#*; reduction of geminates as in *ḥuṭṭ-ni* > [ḥotʕ-ni]; maintenance of long vowels before -CC (e.g. *fāṭḥa*); shortening of pretonic long vowels, for example, in *kātḥīn* > *katḥīn* as in some Palestinian dialects, but also like the rest of the Delta; fronting and raising of unstressed short \*a in forms such as *ḥiṭṭāb* ‘wood gatherer’, *tīʕbān* ‘tired’ (cf. Behnstedt 1997a, maps 84–6). The 1sng pronoun *ani* is also to be found in Palestinian ‘bedouin’ dialects (Rosenhouse 1984: 79), and in the Syrian Ḥōran dialects; stress on the 1sng poss suffix as in *bagaratí* ‘my cow’ (B&W 1985b, map 150) is a feature present in Sinai and the Negev (Blanc 1970: 130–1) and the suffix -*ki* for the 2sng (B&W 1985b, map 152; Taymūr 1971: 134; cf. Blanc loc. cit.; Bauer 1913: 68 for Palestinian ‘bedouin’; as well as in the western oases); -*a* for the 3msng suffix (B&W 1985b, map 154) is also typical of rural dialects of the Ramallah area (Seeger 2011: 81; Bauer 1913: 68). The eastern Delta also shares the system of derived verb patterns with the eastern Arabic dialects, corresponding exactly to those of Ḥōrāni (in Syria), i.e. both show a morphologically determined distribution of /a/ and /i/ in the final syllable of the stem instead of a phonological one, such as in Cairo Arabic. The p-stem prefixes include *bi-*, *bu-* as in *bimsik, buḥrut*, also found in Palestinian Arabic. ‘To come’ has a prothetic *i*: *iḡa* similar to *i-* or *a-* in Levantine Arabic, the north-eastern dialects (NED) and Port Said with a short vowel: *iga* (NED), *aga* (PS), but also in Yemen *aga* (B&W 2005: 214, map 106). Forms such as *ídṛa* ‘millet’, *íṣṭa* ‘winter’ with stressed inserted vowels (Woidich 1979: 86) can equally be found in Sinai (de Jong 2000: 108), Palestine, and Ḥōrān, but not in the Negev (Blanc 1970: 123). Eastern lexical elements shared with the Sharqiyya are *akām* ‘how many’ (Palestinian *akam*), *bidd-* ‘to want’, *rakaḍ* ‘to run’, *šār* ‘to become’, *xumm* ‘hen-house’, *ḡādi* ‘there,’ and others.

As for the north-eastern dialects, some eastern elements like the *mádrasa* stress, *iga* ‘he came’ may be explained by intensive contacts with Syria and Lebanon in the Middle Ages, when imports into Egypt from the Levant came through the harbour of Dami-etta, and the wood trading and shipbuilding industries there were in Syrian hands.

<sup>16</sup> Only in the village of is-Samāʕna (Abul-Fadl 1961: 132, text 92). According to the Tāj al-ʕArūs *ḡamāʕatun min ʕarabi Filasṭīn* (‘a group of Palestinian Arabs’), cf. Ramzi 1955 II/1: 120. Al-Ṭayyib (1993: 602) lists all families of is-Samāʕna. Amongst them are names which are found in the topography, namely il-Ḥalawāt (markaz Hihya) and il-ʕAwāmra (not in Ramzi, cf. Woidich 1979).

<sup>17</sup> Map 60 in B&W 1985b shows a distribution of *madrāsa* – *yíxibzu* for the eastern Sharqiyya. This is a typographical error. It should read *mádrasa* – *yíxibzu*.



### 3.3 THE WESTERN DELTA

#### 3.3.1 MAGHREBIZATION, AND THE *niktib-niktibu* ISSUE

The idea that the paradigmatic levelling in the 1st person of the p-stem from *aktib-niktib* to *niktib-niktibu* introduced into North Africa and Egypt in the seventh century AD by the pre-Ḥilālī dialects occurred again five hundred years later in the dialects of the Ḥilālī invaders, has bewildered some dialectologists. Not so Marçais and Guïga (1925: XXIV, n. 1): ‘Si surprenante que paraisse la chose, il faut admettre qu’à deux reprises deux parlers arabes, indépendamment l’un de l’autre, ont réalisé sur la même aire géographique une même innovation morphologique, singulière et exceptionnelle’ (‘However surprising it may appear, it must be accepted that on two separate occasions, two Arabic dialects, independently of one another, have introduced, in the same geographical space the same unusual and exceptional morphological innovation’). But for other researchers, what is perplexing is the fact that only a few towns in the Maghreb were Arabicized by the time the Banī Hilāl and the Banī Sulaym arrived – so why should such a large body of invaders who settled not in urban, but in rural areas, adopt the p-stem forms of the few Arabic-speaking towns? Alternatively, if it occurred independently of those few town dialects, why did the same morphological remodelling happen all over again? Corriente (2011: 39 ff.) proposes a solution to ‘this riddle’ and his contention is that this levelling ‘must have happened only once... in a given place’, and that ‘that place could only have been Egypt, the historically documented abode of the Hilālī and related tribes of the later waves of Arab invaders of western North Africa, as well as of the Arab tribesmen who, five centuries earlier, had launched the first campaigns aimed at subjugating the west’ (Corriente 2011: 40). For an in-depth discussion see Owens 2003. At first glance, map 211 in B&W 1985b even suggests a gradual remodelling of the 1sng and pl of the p-stem in the Delta: *aktib-niktib* in the east, then a transitional zone with *aktib-niktibu* in the centre-west (mainly Kafr ish-Shēkh province) and finally *niktib-niktibu* in the bigger part of Biḥēra province. This dialect-geographical interpretation of the Delta as a transitional area has already been proposed in Behnstedt 1978: 69, as well as in Jastrow 1982: 137. But things are more complicated than that. This levelling had, apparently, taken place earlier still in some Yemeni dialects, e.g. in the dialects of the bedouin of the Ḥugariyyah: *ani nistahi minnak* ‘j’ai honte devant toi’ (Landberg 1920–1942: 120), and in a similar case (Landberg 1895: 55).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Apart from the Ḥugariyyah similar cases are reported for Najd and Yemen (Blau 1981: 119f with more references) and in a broader Semitic context for Aramaic, e.g. for Maʿlūla (Brockelmann 1908: 567), Palestinian Aramaic (Blau 1981: 119f). In all these cases, however, only the 1sng *nqtl* is attested, not a 1pl *nqtlu*. This is the reason why Blau (1981: 119ff.), who was not aware of the *aqtl-nqtlu* paradigm in Egypt first reported in Behnstedt 1978: 69, concluded contrary to common opinion—see for instance Brockelmann 1908: 567; Behnstedt 1978: 69; Owens 2003: 735—that *nqtl* precedes *nqtlu* historically. Blau, loc. cit., explains *nqtl*, like others before him (e.g. Socin 1901 III: §194 p. 235), as a contraction of/ with the independent pronoun: *ana aqtl* > *naqtl*. This would mean that there was—at least for some time—a paradigm *nqtl-nqtl* which would develop later into *nqtl-nqtlu*. To the best of our knowledge, there



Whatever the case, since *niktib-niktibu* occurs in Andalusia (Corriente 2006: 109), and is definitely a feature of Maltese Arabic, it must have been brought there with the first wave from Egypt at the beginning of the eighth century AD. It is quite plausible, then, that this feature had itself been brought to Egypt earlier still by the conquering armies from the Arabian peninsula, since it is not very probable that it could have developed there and spread to such a large part of the then Arabic-speaking population in so short a span of time.

As we pointed out in B&W (2005: 162), the *aktib-niktibu* paradigm could also be the result of dialect contact, a partial adaptation, between the *niktib-niktibu* and *aktib-niktib* areas (first proposed in Woidich 1996: 338). Often the configurations of dialect maps may be interpreted in different ways. But since MacMichael (1922: 147) states ‘As regards the Banī Sulaym, though most of them left Egypt for the west at the time of the great migration of 1051, by no means all of them did so. At the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> century they were very powerful in Baḥira Province, and very many of them were also settled in the Fayyūm and Upper Egypt’, one could consider the forms to be original in the Delta. But one must not forget those Yemenis who supposedly had this feature, too. Because of the constant return of Maghrebi tribes to Egypt over the centuries, the use of these forms must have been reinforced by these newcomers. In other regions of Egypt, e.g. UE1 and UE3, these forms are, at least partly, rather due to later Maghrebization from the fourteenth century onwards, and perhaps also in Baḥariyya.<sup>19</sup> It is not necessarily the case that the *niktib-niktibu* levelling must have had its sole origin in Upper Egypt, as Owens (2003) suggests.<sup>20</sup>

It is perhaps a coincidence, but in the western Delta we find the same two populations as were in the Maghreb right from the beginning, namely Berbers and, from the tenth century onwards, Banī Sulaym and Banī Hilāl. In Ancient Egypt already, the western Delta was a catchment area of Berber tribes: ‘They also succeeded in establishing themselves in the western border areas along the Delta until Middle Egypt’ (Eggebrecht 1984: 106). Murray (1935: 17) states, after Herodotus (Herodot 2005 II: 18), that the Berber *Tehenu* were ‘the almost sedentary

is no convincing evidence for a paradigm with an identical 1sng and 1pl in modern Arabic dialects. The evidence for such a type in Maidaguri/Nigeria and for the Shukriyya/Sudan (based on Reichmuth 1983: 277, 290) adduced in Owens 2003: 729, fails to convince. The paradigm of the Shukriyya desiderative *al-* with its variant *hal-* (Reichmuth 1983: 290), to which *annašrab* ‘let me drink’ belongs, harks back to the imperative *\*xall/xalli* of the verb *xalla*, *yixalli* ‘to let’ (Woidich 1995b: 263). Parallels for this exist all over Upper Egypt, in particular in Dakhla Oasis. Examples from there such as *xanni* *ʔaḥannā* ‘let me grind it’ and the corresponding allegro forms *xann-ašuf* *xann-išuf fiḥā yāy* ‘let me see what’s in it’ (West Dakhla, al-Mūšiyya) suggest that the *-nn-* is the result of an assimilation of *\*xalni* (> *\*xanni* > *xann-*), which itself is an abridged form of *xallini* ‘let me...’. The *n-* thus has nothing to do with a conjugational element *ni-* of the 1st person, but harks back ultimately to the object suffix *-ni* ‘me’. The Nigerian example (Owens 2003: 729), apparently, is taken from lively speech and could be a kind of anticipation of what is coming immediately after when the speaker indeed switches to the 1 pl, using the independent pronoun.

<sup>19</sup> The *niktib-niktibu* paradigm in the dialect of the Jews of Cairo (Blanc 1974) is not a linguistic innovation, nor does it represent an older stage of Cairo Arabic. It is due to the immigration of Jews from the Maghreb in the eleventh century. See B&W 2005: 41.

<sup>20</sup> According to *El*<sup>2</sup> III: 385 only ‘a large number of the families of the Banū Hilāl and Banū Sulaym [were] deported into Upper Egypt’. This means that a proportion of them must have remained in northern Egypt.

population of what is now the province of Beheira'. In Christian times the Berbers perennially harassed the Wādī Naṭrūn with their invasions (Toussoun 1931: 16, 20 ff.). Arabic sources also mention them for the west, e.g. Al-Kindī (1912: 243) *min ahli l-Buḥayrati mina l-barbari wa ḡayrihim* ('the people of al-Buḥayra, Berbers and others') and (275) *tumma waqa'a l-ixtilāfu bayna l-Muẓaffari b. Zakī bi l-ʿIskandariyyati wa bayna barbari l-Buḥayra* ('there then ensued a conflict between al-Muẓaffar b. Zakī in Alexandria and the Berbers of al-Buḥayra'). Yāqūt (1984) II: 477 (see EI<sup>1</sup> s.v. Dumyāt) quotes a *ḥadīṭ* ('saying') according to which Damietta and Alexandria would be conquered by [the third Caliph] 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and that 'the *kharāḡ* ['land-tax'] of Alexandria would be raised from the Berbers' (*fa ʿammā l-ʿIskandariyya, fa kharāḡuhā mina l-barbar*). According to Al-Qalqashandī (*Nihāya*: 155) the Fawāṭiḡ of the Banī Mazdish Berbers settled in Alexandria and Rosetta. The question whether they belonged to the old-established Berbers or to newcomers who came with the Fāṭimid invasion of Egypt must be left unanswered. The same applies to the Berbers on the border of the Alexandria canal mentioned by Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ* I: 171). In any case, this means that when language contact in Egypt is discussed, not only Coptic but also Berber has to be taken into account.

### 3.3.2 THE CASE OF ALEXANDRIA

The relationship between Alexandria and the Maghreb is old. It starts with the settlement, according to some sources, of more than 10,000 pirates from al-Andalus in AD 815. Other more realistic estimates put the figure at 3,000 (Aguadé 1976: 162). Ten years later, these pirates were forced to leave Alexandria and conquered the island of Crete.

Very early on, Alexandria had become a centre of the Mālekite *madhhab* (Müller-Wiener 1992: 12, n. 24)—'sich das religiöse und das damit verbundene intellektuelle Leben Alexandrias traditionell nach dem vorwiegend mālikitisch geprägten Maḡrib orientierte' ('the religious and intellectual life bound up with it of Alexandria was orientated towards the dominantly Mālekite-influenced Maghreb') (Müller-Wiener 1992: 127). Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn founded a *madrasa* exclusively for Maghrebis, to which were attached a hospital and lodgements, and he brought a large number of Maghrebi scholars to Alexandria (Müller-Wiener 1992: 127). Amongst the great scholars and theologians mentioned from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, eleven hail from Alexandria, but nine from the Maghreb.<sup>21</sup> Many of the Mālekite judges and jurists were also of Maghrebi origin. Of the seventy Mālekite jurists mentioned by Al-Maqrīzī (*Sulūk* III: 1–2) for Alexandria, Cairo, Tripolis (Syria), Damascus, and Aleppo, thirty-five have a Maghrebi *nisba* such as al-Maḡribī, al-Tūnisī, al-Qayrawānī, al-Ṣanhājī, al-Tilimsanī, al-Tanasī. Several Alexandrian judges have the last-mentioned *nisba* (Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* III/2: 261, III/2: 344; Al-Taghribirdī, *Nujūm* X: 329, n. 1).

<sup>21</sup> Amongst the ʿAʿlām min al-ʿIskandariyya ('Prominent Men of Alexandria'): 148 ff., 158 ff., 190 ff., numerous scholars, theologians and mystics from the Maghreb are to be found. Three neighbourhoods of Alexandria bear the names of some of them: Sidi Bishr, Sidi Gābir, ish-Shaṭbi (the latter from Jativa in al-Andalus).

The abolition of the capitation tax for pilgrims by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn encouraged more Maghrebi to go on the *ḥaġġ*. This also motivated many Maghrebi businessmen to establish themselves in Alexandria, amongst them the wholesaler ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Šinī, who traded from Alexandria with the Far East (Labib 1965: 45). The colony of Maghrebi traders is mentioned in 1411, when they had to pay only a 10% tax instead of the normal 33% (*Nujūm* XIV: 128). In 1514 they are mentioned by Ibn Iyās (1960 IV: 424). In addition, Maghrebi sailors were stationed in Alexandria. They were employed to build ships by the Atabek Yalbuga in 1365.

The *raʿīs al-baḥr* (‘head of the navy’) was also a Maghrebi, namely Muḥammad al-Tāzī, mentioned by Al-Maqrīzī (*Sulūk* III 1: 159). Maghrebi sailors played an important role in 1365 in the attack on Alexandria by the Franks under Pierre de Lusignan. In *Sulūk* (III: 119), Tripolis (Libya) is given as their place of origin. As a consequence of the numerous attacks by pirates, Al-Nuwayrī, the chronicler of Alexandria, proposed that a Maghrebi garrison be stationed in Alexandria (Müller-Wiener 1992: 57–8). Two Maghrebi Alexandrians who worked in the mint are known through a lawsuit, namely Ibn al-Mawāzīnī and al-Malāqī from Malaga. A more prominent Maghrebi was Abu Yaḥyā al-Liḥyānī, former ruler of Tunis, who in 1326 died exiled in Alexandria (*Nujūm* IV: 269).

From the eleventh century onwards a massive immigration of Jews from the Maghreb took place, because the Maghreb had become ‘uninhabitable for non-Muslims’ under the rule of the Almoravids (Goitein 1967: 204). Of the Jewish Maghrebi traders, two are known: Yeshū‘a b. Ismā‘il (eleventh century, Goitein 1973a: 119) ‘who like many Maghrebis had settled in Alexandria’, and Ismā‘il b. Farah, ‘a native of Gabes in southern Tunisia, but settled in Alexandria’ (Goitein 1973a: 204).

The original dialect of Alexandria is (was) closely related to the Bih̄era dialects. It is worth mentioning that [ɟ] for \*g was still heard by Vollers (1895: 8) at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> /g/ for \*q was still being used by elderly people in the 1970s. Other features to be mentioned here are the frequency of secondary emphatic consonants, non-elision in forms such as *misikit* (Cairo *miskit*), preponderance of the *a*-type verb I (*labas, nazal, šarab, nasa*), and, of course, the paradigmatic levelling *niktib-niktibu* in the *p*-stem (Behnstedt 1980; Nallino 1939: 2).

The original dialect must have been even more Maghrebi, since Taymūr (1971: 44), who died in 1930, mentions that fifty years before, such pronunciations as *zīsr* ‘bridge’, *zūz* ‘pair’ (or ‘two’?) could be heard. Such pronunciations suggest /ʒ/ for *ġim*, and not the /g/ Vollers says he heard, but it could be that two different dialects were spoken there. After its decline in the fifteenth century, Alexandria might possibly have been ruralized.<sup>23</sup> When the French arrived there in 1798 the town counted only some 7,000 inhabitants.

<sup>22</sup> Actually Vollers writes *dy* ‘like ‘di’ in ‘soldier’ (missing in the German version of 1890). If we understand this correctly, it should be something like [ɟ], which is the modern pronunciation. For Bih̄era both [ɟ] and [ʒ] are attested, see B&W 1985b, map 11.

<sup>23</sup> For the decline of Alexandria see Müller-Wiener 1922: 53, 67, 72, 75, 80, 86, 88, 89.

What has been said about the original dialect of Alexandria has, in the meantime, become history. When briefly described in the 1970s (Behnstedt 1980), it was a 'one foot in the grave dialect' (to use Einar Haugen's phrase). These days, the Cairene dialect is spoken by the upper and middle classes there with some local peculiarities, i.e. with an 'Alexandrian accent', as Wahba (1996: 109) puts it.

### 3.3.3 THE BIḤĒRA AND KAḤR ISH-SHĒKH

#### 3.3.3.1 History

Historically speaking, the Biḥēra (in CLA al-Buḥayra) was a larger entity than the present-day province of that name in the western Delta. It also contained large parts of what nowadays is the Kaḥr ish-Shēkh province.<sup>24</sup> The dialects of these two provinces are very similar, except that in the Kaḥr ish-Shēkh we have the intermediate paradigm *aktib* – *niktibu* for the p-stem.

The question of whether the Banī Sulaym mentioned in the Biḥēra for the thirteenth century by MacMichael (1922 I: 146) were returning migrants from the Maghreb or belonged to those who never went there and remained in Egypt has to be left unanswered.<sup>25</sup> Anyhow, with the Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt in 969, a continuous return of Maghrebi tribes to Egypt began. With the Fāṭimids came the Berber tribes the Kutāma, Lawāta, Mazāta, and Zanāta. The Lawāta first settled in the Biḥēra, where they are mentioned as allies of the Sinbis (*Bayān*: 10). Then they moved farther south to the Fayyūm, the north of Middle Egypt, and the Minufiyya, even to the Sharqiyya. 'Abdīn (1961: 132–3) thinks that they were already Arabicized. They have an Arabic genealogy and consider themselves to be Qays, which indicates that they had mixed with the Banī Sulaym (*Bayān*: 49). The Mazāta, Hawwāra, and Zanāra (a *baṭn* of the Lawāta) practised agriculture in the Biḥēra and moved in winter to the Gulf of Sallūm and the Barqa. According to Ibn Khaldūn ('*Ibar* VI: 6), they comprised 'a mixture of Arabs and Berbers', the number of which is unknown. Another reason for the massive immigration of Maghrebi tribes was a famine in the Barqa in 1195 (Zaytūn n.d.: 294).<sup>26</sup> Then, between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, different subtribes and clans of the Sulaym moved back eastward. When they had left for the Maghreb in 1051, some of them had remained in areas relatively near to Egypt, e.g. the Hayb who settled in the Barqa and the Gulf of Sallūm. From this period on in the Biḥēra, several subtribes are mentioned: the 'Awf, the Fā'īd (Zaytūn n.d.: 293), the clans of the Hayb, the Muḥārib, and the Labīdh (Kaḥḥāla III: 1009; *Nihāya*: 410, 430), the tribes called after their sheikhs al-Maqādima and Awlād Turkiyya (*Sulūk* III/1: 335, III/2: 498), who were constantly engaged in fights with the

<sup>24</sup> During the Fāṭimid period the area of the markaz Fuwwa was added (C. H. Becker in *El*<sup>1</sup> I: 804 s.v. 'Buḥayra'). The bedouin residing there were a notoriously rebellious element during Mameluke times and later (G. Wiet in *El*<sup>2</sup> I: 1288). Cf. also *Tārīkh* IX: 43, n. 1.; Ramzī 1958 II/2: 20.

<sup>25</sup> As for the Banī Qurra among them, the sources are contradictory. Cf. Ilse Lichtenstädter in *El*<sup>1</sup> III: 830; *Bayān* 12/13; '*Ibar* IV: 69; Halm 1987: 185; MacMichael 1922 I: 134.

<sup>26</sup> Beside that, the Barqa has always been linked to Egypt and used to export livestock, wool, honey, and tar to Egypt (*El*<sup>2</sup> I: 1049a s.v. 'Barqa').

Mamelukes, e.g. the Labīdh in 1438 (*Nujūm* XV: 230) and in 1460/1 (*Nujūm* XVI: 226, 272). In 1472 another punitive expedition was sent against them (*qad tazāyada šarruhum*: (Ibn Iyās 1960 V: 115)). In 1464 the Muḥārib advanced as far as Gīza, where they were beaten by the Mamelukes (Ibn Iyās 1960 II: 427). Fazāra are also now mentioned, e.g. in 1485 when one of their sheikhs was beheaded (Ibn Iyās 1960 III: 216). In 1474 the ʿAzzāla appeared and plundered Gīza (Al-Ṭayyib 1993: 788). In 1498 they again rebelled against the central power and refused to pay the *kharāḡ* (Ibn Iyās 1960 III: 405). After their defeat against Ṭūmān Bāy, elements of them were deported to Upper Egypt. In 1512–14 and 1517 they rebelled again (Zaytūn n.d.: 303; Ibn Iyās 1960 IV: 256; Al-Ṭayyib 1993: 788).

The notorious Hawwāra, originally Berbers, mainly from Barqa, but completely Arabized, spent an interlude in the Biḥēra. Earlier, in the tenth century, some of them had taken part in the conquest of Egypt by the Fāṭimids, and others ‘used to cultivate their crops on the land between Alexandria and old Cairo’ (*El*<sup>2</sup> III: 296b ‘Hawwāra’ (P. Holt, source Ibn Khaldūn)). Since they, too, participated in the rebellions, the Sultan Barqūq resettled most of them in 1380 in Upper Egypt (loc. cit.).

This large-scale Maghrebi return to Egypt is also confirmed by Ibn Khaldūn (*ʿIbar* VI: 103): ‘when I came to Egypt [AD 1382], there I found many inhabitants of the Barqa who had returned to Egypt’. For the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the sources mention little about the tribes. In 1698 an invasion of western bedouin failed (Murray 1935: 27). Then followed the Hanādi in the eighteenth century, who dominated the Biḥēra for almost a century. Against them the Libyan Jumayʿāt, settled in the Biḥēra, called in the Awlād ʿAlī, who in 1813 definitively drove the Hanādi out of the Biḥēra.

### 3.3.3.2 Dialect

The Maghrebi adstratum in the western Delta, despite the shibboleth *niktib-niktibu*, which may be old, and was not necessarily introduced in the course of the bedouin reflux, is not very marked compared to that of parts of southern Upper Egypt or the northern oases, nor compared to the eastern impact in the Sharqiyya. The [ʒ] for *ḡim*, for instance, is certainly a more recent pronunciation which occurs in the west of the Biḥēra, where the Awlād ʿAlī settled. Also sporadically recorded forms like *šazzal* ‘to register’, *mašzid* ‘mosque’, with metathesis of sibilants, may be attributed to the influence of their dialect. A widespread form is *šazara* ‘tree’, a contamination of ‘bedouin’ *šzira* and autochthonous *saḡara*. For the distribution of [dʒ] – [ʒ] ~ [gʲ] see B&W 1985b, map 11, and more recent unpublished research carried out by Laila Abdel-Aal<sup>27</sup> in Kafr ish-Shēkh province, which shows a larger pocket with [ʒ] south of Burg Mighīzil near the estuary of the Nile and some isolated pockets elsewhere. Other features due to Maghrebi influence (B&W 2005: 103, map 43) represent the isoglosses *imbāriḥ* – *ilbāriḥ* ‘yesterday’ and *bēda* – *daḡya* ‘egg’. The Biḥēra dialects are essentially Egyptian, and one reason for the insignificant Maghrebi impact might be

<sup>27</sup> Laila Abdel-Aal Al-Ghalban, English Dept., Fac. of Arts, Kafr el Sheikh University.

the fact that the autochthonous *fallāḥīn* simply did not adapt to the dialect(s) of the Maghrebi newcomers. In the present day, the same phenomenon was observed during field work (and also in the Fayyūm): Libyan bedouin newcomers all adopted the Egyptian dialects of the autochthonous population and never vice versa. In comparison to the eastern Delta, the bedouin settlement in the Middle Ages was not so intensive in the Biḥēra as the map of bedouin land tenures shows (B&W 1985b, map 552). Nor are there any place names which would suggest bedouin settlers.

### 3.4 THE FAYYŪM AND THE NORTHERN NILE VALLEY (NME<sub>1</sub>)

#### 3.4.1 HISTORY

For the Fayyūm, Arabs appear in the sources as early as the second century BC, cf. Retsö 2003: 337. The tribe of Lakhm, closely related to the Judhām, is attested right from the beginning of the conquest and its presence on the eastern shore of the Nile is mentioned up until the twelfth century (*Bayān*: 59–61) with detailed information about settlements. Others confirm Lakhm concentrations on the east bank of the Nile from Biba, and on the west bank to as far north as Ḥilwān (*Nihāya*; *Bayān*: 59, n. 94). As for the Fayyūm, mainly Yemeni tribes are attested at the beginning besides Lakhm, and also in AD 824 (see Map 3.2 and Riṭī 1996: 92). Al-Kindī (1912: 209) only mentions *aʿrāb*, i.e. bedouin. Berber tribes are also attested very early, in AD 921 (before the Fāṭimid invasion of Egypt), and also in Middle Egypt: *wa malakati l-Barbaru Ġazīrata l-Ušmūnayn kullahā wa l-Fayyūm* ('the Berbers controlled the whole of Ashmūnēn and the Fayyūm') (Al-Kindī 1912: 277). In the eleventh century in the context of the Abū Rakwa rebellion there is mention of the Banī Kilāb (*Ibar* IV: 70), a tribe which, according to Nabulsi (Shāfiʿī 1940: 323) co-dominated the Fayyūm in the thirteenth century with the Banī ʿAjlān. The Banī Kilāb and the Banī ʿAjlān originate from the Ḥijāz. Quite a few place names in the Fayyūm are related to these two Arab tribes (see Ramzī 1953–8 II-3: 82, 83, 100, 103–4, 110–11). Later the Maghrebi ʿAwf are mentioned, and to the south of the Fayyūm, the Maghrebi Lawāta. From the eighteenth century onwards Libyan bedouin settled on the border of the Fayyūm. Linguistically, they became completely assimilated, cf. Awad 1954: 246.

#### 3.4.2 DIALECT

Linguistic analysis shows that the Fayyūm dialects belong to the earliest linguistic stratum, in that they have: a very conservative syllable structure; a voiceless reflex of \*q<sup>28</sup>; /g/ for \*g. Other features, such as the *bukaṛa*-syndrome, cannot be attributed to any specific tribe. The Fayyūm dialect has maintained diphthongs which may be old,

<sup>28</sup> Nowadays it is a glottal stop, but for the nineteenth century /q/ is reported, see Vollers 1895: 10, Al-Dasūqī 1920: 58, Taymūr 1971: 74.

but the Libyan ‘bedouin’ dialects also show this feature. As for Fayyūmi *gawz* ‘two’, as in *gaz t-ıyyām* ‘two days’, this might be of Maghrebi origin.

### 3.5 NORTHERN MIDDLE EGYPT (NME<sub>2</sub>)

#### 3.5.1 HISTORY

In early times especially, Yemeni tribes are attested. For al-Bahnasa, the Kuhlān are mentioned in the second century of the *hiğra* (Riṭī 1996: 90); Ḥaḍramawt and Khawlān had their pastures between Biba and Banī Mazār.<sup>29</sup> According to Khurshid 1992: 273, the Khawlān settled in Sumuṣṭa, the Āl Wa‘la in Ṣaṭṭ Maydūm.<sup>30</sup> In the thirteenth century a massive immigration of the Maghrebi Lawāta took place. Places where they settled (according to *Bayān* and Ramzī) are as-Sāqiya, Samalūṭ, Ṭambidi, Gulōšana, Saqqāra. Places named after a Lawāta tribe are Banī Mazār (originally Banī Nazār), Banī Mijdal, Banī ‘Alī, Banī Muḥammad, Banī ‘Amir, Maghāgha (cf. Lewicki 1986: 695a), id-Ḍabā‘na.

#### 3.5.2 DIALECT

As for the dialect, the syllable structure is very conservative and shows no elisions of /i/ in unstressed open syllables, and the derived patterns of the verb are monomorphemic as in the dialects of the north (see B&W 1985b, maps 226, 236, 237, 238, 240, 244, 246). That the area with /g/ for *qāf* and /ğ/ for *ğīm* more or less corresponds to the settlement of the Lawāta is perhaps no accident, if it is the case that at that time this tribe was already Arabized (cf. ‘Abdīn 1961: 32–133). Other features observed in ‘Idwa, (point 648 in B&W 1985b), namely the alternation of /ğ/ ~ /ž/, the merging of /ž/ – /z/ into /ž/ and of /š/ – /s/ into /š/ (B&W 1988 II: 74) may also be attributed to that adstratum.<sup>31</sup>

### 3.6 SOUTHERN MIDDLE EGYPT (SME)

#### 3.6.1 HISTORY

In the eighth century, the region around il-Ashmūnēn became a centre of the Quraysh. The initial inflow of Quraysh to this area during the first three centuries is explained by the fact that a third of the governors in Umayyad times were from the Quraysh (seven out of twenty-two) and each governor brought his fellow tribesmen

<sup>29</sup> Amongst the scholars of al-Bahnasa, Yāqūt (1984 I: 517) mentions a certain Yaḥyā b. Naṣr al-Khawlanī, and Al-Qalqashandī (1963 I: 326) an Abū Idrīs al-Khawlanī.

<sup>30</sup> Their origin is not indicated. There is a Wa‘la tribe to be found in Yām (Saudi Arabia, near the Yemeni border).

<sup>31</sup> See §3.8 for another possible interpretation with respect to Baḥariyya oasis.



with him to Egypt (see §3.1.1). The most important subsequent immigration of tribesmen of the Quraysh occurred in the tenth century, when the Jaʿāfira of the Banī Tālib were expelled from Mecca and sought refuge in Egypt, where many of their tribal companions had already settled (MacMichael 1922: 142). This led to conflicts with the Juhayna and the Balī also living in the area, who were in consequence resettled by the Fāṭimids further south in Upper Egypt. From this period on, the region from il-Ashmūnēn up to Manfalūṭ and Asyūṭ became known as Bilād Quraysh (Khurshid 1992: 88–9).

### 3.6.2 DIALECT

The habitat of the Quraysh corresponds amazingly closely to the boundaries of the SME dialect area. However, /g/ for *qāf* is not necessarily a ‘bedouin’ feature, since it is already attested rather early for the Ḥijāz (Rabin 1951: 126 ff.). The syllable structure remains conservative, as pretonic high vowels, e.g. *ḡibāl* (compare Mecca *ḡubāl*), and high vowels after -CC- as in *kassiri* ‘break! (f)’ are not elided (but this does not apply in word-medial position after a single consonant, as in *libsit* versus *libisit* in NME). The nominal scheme CaCiC (*kabīr*, *katīr*) is maintained (versus NME *kibīr*, *kitīr*). The s-stem inflection of verb pattern I *a*-Type is nearly identical to that of Meccan Arabic (MeA), and the same is true for the derived patterns of the verb. Pattern VII is not used in SME (*itfaʿal* versus MeA *infaʿal*), but an important isogloss begins in this region, namely the replacement of pattern IX by II: *sawwad* ‘to become black’. This applies also to Upper Egypt proper. It is also usual in Yemeni Arabic and obviously represents a west Arabian isogloss unknown in the east, cf. B&W 2005: 159, map 71. The verbal modifier *ʿamma*, including variants (B&W 1985b, maps 219–21), corresponds to MeA *ʿammāl*. The personal pronouns are identical to those of MeA (but also to those of northern Egypt, except the Sharqiyya). The correspondences are still greater in number if we take account of features which MeA has in common generally with Egyptian Arabic, namely loss of the interdental, monophthongs, short forms of the demonstratives, no feminine forms in the plural, etc.

## 3.7 UPPER EGYPT

### 3.7.1 THE IMMIGRATION OF ḤIJĀZĪ TRIBES

For a period of seven centuries, from soon after the Islamic conquest until the fourteenth century, Upper Egypt was marked by the presence of two tribes, the Balī and the Juhayna. The Balī, who formed one third of the Quḍāʿa federation in Syria, were sent to Egypt by the second Caliph, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. The Juhayna were present during the conquest, but did not settle in al-Fuṣṭāṭ, and moved slowly down the Nile Valley. A separate episode of migration concerned the Banī Sulaym, who, being involved with the Qarmaṭian revolts, were forced in 976 to leave their main tribal area in Upper Egypt. They settled first in Aswān and Isna, but also east of the Nile. In the year 1052 their famous migration to the Maghreb began, but some of



them remained in Egypt. Al-Qalqashandī (*Nihāya*: 362, 365/5) mentions as their main abode Sagulṭa, near Akhmīm, and the region of Isna and Aswān. In 1348 fights between them and the Juhayna are reported (*Bayān*: 129). After the rebellion of the Juhayna against the Mamelukes in the middle of the fourteenth century, a large section of them together with some Bali moved southwards into the Sudan. For the whole of the fourteenth century practically no bedouin land tenures are attested (Halm 1979). This was not the first time that Upper Egypt between Manfalūt and Qūš became partly depopulated: when in 1298 the rebellion of the Juhayna and the Bali was suppressed (*Nujūm* VIII: 154), ‘the Ṣaʿīd was empty of its (male) inhabitants so that you did not meet anybody on your way, and when one came into a village only women and children were seen’. Less important were the Kināna in the region of Akhmīm and Quraysh around Jirja. In Aswān, according to Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ* I: 197 ff.), ‘mainly tribes from the Ḥijāz’ (*wa ʾaktaruhum mina l-Ḥiǧāz*), settled there, namely a mixture of Qaḥṭān, Nizār, Muḍar, and ‘a large number’ (*xalqun kaṭīrun*) of Quraysh; the al-Jaʿāfira had also already emigrated to the region of Ashmūnēn (MacMichael 1922: 142). The domain of the latter reached from Aswān to Qūš (loc. cit.).<sup>32</sup>

### 3.7.2 DIALECT

This first Ḥijāzī linguistic stratum is probably best represented by UE2 in the region of Qina. Upper Egypt 2 has in common with SME a still rather conservative syllable structure (B&W 1985b, map 65: *yikállimu*; map 70: *silāh*, *subāṭa*). The p-stem paradigm north of Luxor is predominantly of the *aktib-niktibu* type; *aktib-niktib* is attested only for the town of Guṭṭ (Nishio 1994: 49).<sup>33</sup> The vocalization of the p-stem of pattern t-I and pattern VIII is, as in SME, *yitmasik*, *yiftakir* (B&W 1985b, maps 246, 247, 297; also UE4, map 294; Sudan; for Mecca cf. Schreiber 1971: 38). Also, nominal morphology shows correspondences with SME (*kabīr*, *ṣita*, *rukab*, *gīrab*, *ṣunaṭ* versus *kibīr*, *iṣṭih*, *rkabb*, *grabb*, *ṣnaṭṭ* in UE1 and UE3, see §3.7.3.2). Still more evident is the Ḥijāzī element in UE4. Since there we have a less conservative syllable structure with vowel elisions, and some feminine forms in the plurals of verbs and pronouns, one has to suppose that the immigration from the Ḥijāz lasted right up until the present era, and that some of the village dialects evolved only in recent times. From the sixteenth century onwards, the ʿIlēgāt from Ḥijāz with their villages are mentioned by Al-Ṭayyib (1993: 706–9), amongst them al-Sibaʿiyya and al-Biṣāliyya, where UE4 dialects were found. Of the UE4 dialect area only the north is known, as there is still a lacuna between Silwa and Aswān.

Besides these Ḥijāzī features, there are others. On the phonetic level, the ‘pure’ pronunciation of /ā/ should be mentioned (B&W 1985b, map 3). This lack of ʾimāla was first noted by the early grammarians as a Ḥijāzī feature contrasting with the fronted /ā/ of Tamīm and Qays in eastern Arabia (Vollers 1906: 15). An *i*-umlaut type ʾimāla as in Syrian Arabic and the *qaltu* dialects is unknown in EA. An ʾimāla

<sup>32</sup> Still today, the Jaʿāfira are considered one of the important tribes of the Governorate of Aswān.

<sup>33</sup> Strabo reports that half of the inhabitants of Coptos in his time (25–4 BC) were Arabs (see Garcin 1986).

not conditioned by *i* occurs in the Levant, in Maghrebi dialects, and in Andalusian Arabic, whereas it is absent in Yemen and Sudan. We find this unconditioned type of *ʔimāla* in different manifestations again in the oases (\*ā > ē/ā) and in the eastern Delta, where the allophones of ā vary between ē and an open ō. Perhaps this feature of the Sharqiyya dialects can be related to the Qays who settled there in AD 725.

/a/ in initial position with the definite article, pronouns, and the s-stem of derived verb forms: *al-*, *anta*, *anti*, *aḥna*, *atmasak*, *atkallam*, *atgābal*, *astaʿmal*, is common in UE4 and in west and central Dakhla (B&W 1985b, map 77).<sup>34</sup> The article *al-* dominates in MeA but also in a great number of ‘bedouin’ dialects of the Arabian peninsula. *a-* in the s-stem of derived verb patterns occurs in MeA and Sudanese (Fischer and Jastrow 1980: 117, Reichmuth 1983: 258ff.)<sup>35</sup>. For Saudi Arabia, Prochazka (1988c: 43ff.) indicates patterns VII, VIII, and X with *a-* for the Ḥijāz, the southern Tihāmah, and ʿAsīr (*āngalab*, *āḥtarag*, *āstaxdam*). In Yemen too, forms with *a-* are widespread (see Behnstedt 1985, map 85 and B&W 2005: 159, map 71). The Najd and eastern Arabian dialects have *i-* (Johnstone 1967: 45; Prochazka 1988c: 43ff.: *t(i)sabbah*, *t(i)gābal*, *inkasar*, *istāḡal*, *istaḡal*). As for the pronouns, which have *i-* in Meccan and Sudanese, there is no correspondence: *inta*, *inti*, *intu*, *iḥna*. But for the southern Ḥijāz, Prochazka (1988c: 125ff.) indicates forms with *a-*: *ʔant*, *ʔanta*, *ʔanti*, *ʔantum*, *ʔantu*, *ʔanḥin*, *ʔaḥna*, as in UE4 and west- and central Dakhla.

Feminine plural forms (*intin*, *-kin*, *ḍarabtin*, *tiḍurbin*, *hinna*, *-hin*) are attested in five locations. Most probably they belong to a younger stratum like those of UE3, see §3.7.3. The verbal noun of pattern II, beginning with the area of SME, is not taCCiC but CaCCiC, more rarely CiCCiC or CiCCēC (Khalafallah 1969: 67 *jiddēm*). In MeA and in the Shukriyya dialect of Sudan it is CuCCēC (Schreiber 1971: 61ff.; Reichmuth 1983: 253–4), in the Sudanese Nile Valley CiCCēC, and in Yemen CiCCāC.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.7.3 THE MAGHREBI ELEMENT IN UPPER EGYPT

#### 3.7.3.1 History

According to MacMichael 1922: 147, not all Banī Hilāl, Banī Sulaym, and Fazāra left for the west, and those Banī Hilāl attested in the fourteenth century in the region of Sagulṭa would have been there from the tenth century onwards, i.e. they never left for the Maghreb. This could imply that p-stem forms which we normally think of as the ‘Maghrebi type’ were present there right from the beginning (see Owens 2003: 737–8), since otherwise one could not explain their presence in Sudanese and Chadian Arabic. In other areas of Egypt where tribes from the Ḥijāz, the Juhayna, and the Balī, are also attested very early, they were later superseded by tribes from the

<sup>34</sup> Farafrā shows some variation between *al-* and *il-* (maybe due to insufficient field data), but has /i/ with the pronouns and the *t-*stems of the verb. In Dakhla (west and centre) /a/ appears only in postpausal position, in context it is /i/ (see Woidich 2008: 477).

<sup>35</sup> The dialect of the Shukriyya shows *atkasar*, *atgābal*, *astalam*, but *angalab* varies with *ingalab*, as in Khartoum Arabic (Reichmuth 1983: 264).

<sup>36</sup> Al-Hazmy for the Ḥarb unfortunately provides only one example: *tardīd* ‘repeating’. For CiCCāC/CuCCāC pattern II verbal nouns in eastern Arabia see Holes 2016: 206.

Maghreb, such as the Hawwāra in the region between Asyut and Jirja (= UE<sub>1</sub>) and other tribes, some of which claim to be Fazāra, on the west bank of the Nile from Madinat Habu down to Armant (= UE<sub>3</sub>). There is evidence that those Fazāra (= Sulaym mixed with Berbers) are not the original tribe mentioned, but later returning migrants from Libya. As for the Hawwāra, this is the tribe which is best documented in this part of Upper Egypt, where the UE<sub>1</sub> dialect is spoken. After having settled in the Biḥēra (see §3.3.3.1), they were resettled in Upper Egypt by Sultan Barqūq in 1380. They first settled in the region of Jirja and then expanded all over the Ṣaʿīd up to the province of Qūṣ and in the north as far as Bahnasa (*Nihāya*: 441). Groups of them became sedentary (*Bayān*: 58). In 1412 some of them left for the Sudan (*Bayān*: 134), but they continued to play an important role in Upper Egypt and only in the eighteenth century was their power broken (Kellner-Heinkele 1987: 330, 343). Travel reports from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries indicate that their main abodes were the villages from Asyut to Farshūt (MacMichael 1922: 125). For his time, Al-Qalqashandī (*Nihāya*: 442) lists thirty-two *buṭūn*. As their princes he mentions the Banū ʿAmr. The ʿAḥādība who are mentioned by Al-Taghribirdī in the context of a rebellion of the Hawwāra in 1388 (*Nujūm* XI: 353) belong to the Juhayna (*Nujūm* XII: 156). This proves that not all the Juhayna had left for the Sudan.

### 3.7.3.2 Dialect

As for the dialect of UE<sub>1</sub>, we can attribute its Maghrebi element to the Hawwāra. This dialect type was recorded, amongst others, south of Asyut in the villages il-Janādla, (formerly al-Danājla, a *baṭn* ('subtribe') of the Hawwāra (Ramzī 1953–8 I-4: 18)), ʿArābit Abu Krēsha (named after a Hawwāra sheikh, Ramzī 1953–8 II-4: 98), iṣ-Ṣawāmi<sup>c</sup> (a *baṭn* of the Hawwāra (Ramzī 1953–8 II-4: 92)), il-Balāyza (probably al-Balāzid (Ramzī 1953–8 II-4: 20)).

As for the dialect of UE<sub>3</sub>, it is spoken in the region of il-Biʿerāt on the west bank of Luxor between Madinat Habu and Armant. Some of the speakers of UE<sub>3</sub>, the Bʿerīs (Woidich 2006b), call themselves proudly *nās fuzur*, which means 'belonging to the Fazāra'. This tribe, a subsection of Qays, is not included amongst the Egyptian tribes in Khurshīd 1992: 129, but is included in other sources, e.g. MacMichael 1922: 255, Klippel 1911: 577, Murray 1935: 293ff.<sup>37</sup> Some Fazāra participated in a campaign in western Egypt as early as AD 647 (MacMichael 1922: 144). A larger number of them came to Egypt in the eleventh century and migrated further west with the Banī Hilāl, where in the Barqa they mixed with Berbers (Garcin 1976: 474, n. 4 for their origin (Barqa), habitat (Bahnasa), and affiliation (Qays)). According to Ibn Khaldūn and Idrīsī, they and the Zanāta were 'arabicized Berbers' (MacMichael 1922: 144). As in the case of the Banī Hilāl, MacMichael (loc. cit.) surmises that not all of them had left for the west and that some of them remained in Upper Egypt. After their defeat against Ṭūmān Bāy sections of Fazāra of the Biḥēra were deported to Upper

<sup>37</sup> Klippel (1911: 577) situates them on the west bank of the Nile and classifies them as 'd'origine de l'Arabie'. As for the Fazāra in Sudan, see Murray 1935: 294.

Egypt in the sixteenth century. The main places where B<sup>eri</sup> Arabic (UE<sub>3</sub>) is spoken are Armant, Asfūn il-Maṭā<sup>na</sup>, Kimān il-Maṭā<sup>na</sup>, and, as a consequence, Ramzī (1953–8 II-4: 157) calls them ‘Arab al-Maṭā<sup>ina</sup>, a name which is not mentioned in other sources. Perhaps they are a *baṭn* of the Qaşāş Arabs attested in the area in the sixteenth century. Garcin reports that a Venetian traveller mentions them as a region called ‘Chosas’ in 1598 and quotes Burckhardt, who designates the Qaşāş as a tribe ‘who people the country on the west bank from Thebes to near Esne, and to whom belong the inhabitants of Gourne, Orment and Reheygāt<sup>38</sup> (all celebrated for their bold plundering enterprises) ... both these and the Howara report that they have the same origin from Barbary’ (Garcin 1976: 501). Garcin counts them among the Labidh (Sulaym). The places Burckhardt mentions are exactly those where UE<sub>3</sub> is spoken.<sup>39</sup> Gurna itself speaks the UE<sub>1</sub> dialect, except for its southernmost hamlet, Madinat Habu, where the UE<sub>3</sub> region starts.

Place names of the bedouin type formed with Awlād, Banī (more frequent in Middle Egypt), ‘Arab X, plurals, in particular of proper names, such as al-CaCāCiC, al-CaCāCiCa, al-CaCāCiC, al-CuCaYCāt, Nazlit X, and Naj<sup>s</sup>, are extremely frequent in Upper Egypt. Many of them date from the sixteenth century, according to Ramzī.

### 3.7.4 SOME IMPORTANT LIBYAN DIALECTAL FEATURES IN UE<sub>1</sub> AND UE<sub>3</sub>

Common throughout Upper Egypt south of Asyut is glottalized /t/ [tʔ], as well as in the dialect of the Libyan Awlād ‘Ali recorded west of Alexandria (B&W 1987: 246).<sup>40</sup> Typical for both UE<sub>1</sub> and UE<sub>3</sub> is the elision of high short vowels in unstressed open syllables, diachronically and synchronically: \*hināk > hnāk ‘there’, \*šitā > štih ‘winter’, ninzil+u > ninzlu ‘we go down’. To the Libyan forms *ghāwa* ‘coffee’, *ḥāmar* ‘red’, *nxaḷa* ‘palm tree’, *mğazal* ‘spindle’, *mxarūga* ‘hip’ correspond forms such as *gāhawa*, *āḥamar*, *naxala*, etc. which can be interpreted as interdialectal forms. As for vowel modification in UE<sub>3</sub>, see Woidich 1974, 2006b: 301. To the Libyan forms of the type *misāk–msikat*, *bugār–bguṛa* correspond *māsak–mīsikat*, *bagar–búguṛa* in UE<sub>3</sub>, interdialectal forms which can be explained as partial adaptations, see Woidich 1997: 192 ff. This vowel change was grammaticalized and hyperadapted, which can be seen in the fact that the rule is also applied to pattern

<sup>38</sup> This must be a misprint for ir-Rizigāt, as there is no other similar toponym in the area where UE<sub>3</sub> is spoken.

<sup>39</sup> An internet source (<http://www.ansab-alarab.org/vb/archive/index.php/t-19205.html>) relates that the Bakriyya—tribes with Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq as claimed ancestor—came from the Maghreb, settled in Ḥōsh ‘Isā and id-Dilinjāt (in the western Biḥēra where many Libyan bedouin have settled), left for the Ṣa‘id al-A‘lā because of a drought in the Biḥēra, and settled in the area of al-Maṭā<sup>ina</sup> (*Taʿriḫ Hijrat al-Qabāʾil Awlād Muḥammad, Awlād Maṣṣūr wa l-Maṭā<sup>ina</sup> l-Bakriyya ilā Muḥāfaẓat Qinā*). In another source the author Aḥmad ‘Abd an-Nabī Fuṛḡul has drawn a map of the fourteen settlements of the Bakriyya Arabs in the province of Qinā, all of them on the west bank of the Nile. They are not identical with the fourteen Hawwāra villages previously mentioned. This source, too, indicates their origin as the Maghreb and a former abode in Ḥōsh ‘Isā.

<sup>40</sup> In Libyan Arabic as described in Owens 1984: 8 ‘/t/ is the velarized counterpart of /d/’.

II: *báddal*–*bíddilat*<sup>41</sup>, and to nouns too, as in *mimlika* ‘kingdom’. As for the *i*-type of the verb there exist variants in Libyan Arabic. In B&W (1987: 248) the type *šrib* is reported (also in Griffini 1913: 31) and *išrib* in Owens (1984: 108). Both variants are to be found in Upper Egypt: in UE1 *šrib*, further developed in UE3 as *išrib*, whereas *f* forms in the pl of verbs (ending in *-an*) and in pronouns are attested only in UE3 (Libyan forms in brackets), e.g. *intan* (*intan*), *masaktan* (*misaktan*), *hinna*, *-hin* (*hin*, *-hin*), *misikan* (*msikan*), *yilbisan* (*yalbisan*). The vowels of the p-stem prefixes are determined in UE3 by the base stem: *ninzil* ‘I go down’, *nurgud* ‘I sleep’, *našrab* ‘I drink’, as in eastern Libyan Arabic (Owens 1984: 111ff.). As for pronouns, we have correspondences with *hū* ‘he’, *hī* ‘she’, and the pronominal suffix *-a* of the 3msng. The plural forms *šnaṭṭ* ‘bags’, *brakk* ‘pools’, *īššyy* ‘sticks’ in both UE1 and UE3 (B&W 1985b, maps 349–52) have correspondences mentioned in B&W 1987: 249 and Griffini 1913: 36 *žtat* ‘corpses’, *gfaf* ‘baskets’. The plural forms of the type *bnitta* ‘girls’, *frussa* ‘horses’ are attested in Maghrebi ‘bedouin’ dialects, *ğrobba* ‘ravens’ in Algerian Sahara dialects (Marçais 1977: 127), and also in some ‘bedouin’ dialects of Morocco.

As for the lexicon, there are only a few correspondences, e.g. *bukk* ‘purse’, and some almost pan-‘bedouin’ lexemes, such as *xāṭir* ‘guest’, *ragad* ‘to sleep’, *zēn* ‘good’, *šēn* ‘bad’. That, primarily, it is Upper Egypt from Asyut to Aswān that contains an important Maghrebi ‘bedouin’ element also has to do with the population density in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to the maps in Halm 1979, Middle Egypt at that time was densely populated and 438 localities are entered in the land registries. As for Upper Egypt south of Asyut, only eighty-four localities are mentioned in the registries. The explanation of why this area was rather empty is not just the emigration of the Juhayna and the Balī, but also the continuous waves of plague from which Upper Egypt suffered. The worst of these lasted from 1347 to 1349 and was followed by twelve more. These ravaged the Egyptian peasantry to such a degree that in the Delta ‘almost all the peasants died’ (*Nujūm* X: 202) and ‘the Ša‘id was empty’ (*Nujūm* X: 210), though this is certainly exaggerated, see Wiet 1962. In this relatively empty space the Maghrebi ‘bedouin’ element could assert itself more powerfully, whilst the Lawāta and Hawwāra in Middle Egypt were linguistically absorbed by the local population. One piece of lexical evidence which points clearly in this direction is the fact that Coptic terms for plough and yoke parts are still in use in Middle Egypt but not in Upper Egypt, where Arabic terms are in use (see map 19, B&W 2005: 82). It seems that Coptic had died out when the bedouin settled there and began practising agriculture.

In Libyan ‘bedouin’ Arabic *bayḍ* ‘eggs’ is a taboo word meaning ‘balls (testicles)’ and is replaced by the euphemism *daḥy*. In the Bihēra, with its Libyan inflow, *daḥy* also replaces *bēḍ*. A similar replacement has happened in Upper Egypt, since *bēḍ* is rare there and euphemisms such as *kaḥrūt*, *ğaḥrūd*, *daḥrūd*, all related to *daḥrağa* ‘to roll, wobble’ are in use. Parallel to the linguistic borders, there is, according to Winkler 1936: 455, (and see also Woidich 1996: 345), a sharp distinction south of Asyut in material and spiritual culture between the regions where the SME dialect and the UE1 dialect are spoken.

<sup>41</sup> In Libyan Arabic *baddal*–*baddilat*.

### 3.8 THE OASES

#### 3.8.1 HISTORICAL SOURCES

The oases were well known in antiquity,<sup>42</sup> and their inhabitants were seen as ‘une race à part à l’époque romaine’ (Wagner 1987: 120). Historical information about the oases in early times is scarce,<sup>43</sup> therefore we have to rely on other sources such as oral history, material culture, and language, which might throw light upon the history of its settlement.

From the earliest times, Berbers are attested in the oases. Al-Kindī, who for the year 746 writes in general terms about the oases, mentions only the Masāla and Berbers as their inhabitants (1912: 130), with Masāla being possibly also the name of a Berber tribe (perhaps for Māsila or Māsala, a subtribe of the Lawāta, see Lewicki 1986: 695a). Ibn Ḥawqal (1964: 151ff.) claims that the inhabitants of the oases before the Islamic conquest were Greeks who after the conquest were ruled by the dynasty of ‘Abdūn of the Berber tribe of Lawāta.<sup>44</sup> In the four oases, he mentions the castles of the ‘Abdūn.<sup>45</sup> Al-Maqrīzī reports that the oases were cultivated by a Coptic king and that their Coptic inhabitants had mixed with the Berbers and that in the year AD 943–4 they were ruled by the Berber prince ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān.<sup>46</sup> As for Farafrā, Ibn Ḥawqal mentions that the majority of its population were Copts and that amongst the numerous population of the oases there was an important group of the Banī Hilāl.<sup>47</sup> In all the oases he mentions mosques, which means that at that time (the tenth century) an Arabic-Islamic element must have existed there. Strangely enough, Al-Idrīsī (twelfth century) describes the oases as uninhabited. As for Dakhla he mentions ‘herdsmen and bedouin’. Ibn Khaldūn (*Ibar* VI: 101) reports that the ‘Uzza (Sulaym) in the fourteenth century had problems with their leached soils and that therefore they were compelled to look for new homes ‘in the land of the palm trees’ south of Barqa, in Awjila (Libya), in Shantariyya (= Siwa), and ‘in the oases and what is beyond them . . . up to the neighbouring Sudan’. This can only be interpreted as ‘Egyptian oases south of Siwa’. He mentions other Maghrebi tribes, namely the Muḥārib<sup>48</sup> (Ja‘far b. Kilāb) and the Rawwāḥa (Āl Zabīd, quoted in Al-Ṭayyib without source). Later sources about the oases do not furnish information about their population. Ibn Iyās (1960 IV: 98, 115, 124, 186, 321, 326, 346) mentions that they

<sup>42</sup> See *in extenso* Wagner 1987. Semitic names in Baḥariyya (IIe/IIIe AD): *Αβδομαλιχ* and *Αβδοβαλοσ* (Wagner 1987: 246).

<sup>43</sup> For a historical account based on Arabic sources, see Décobert 1982, Schubarth-Engelschall 1967.

<sup>44</sup> ‘Luwāta’ according to Al-Bakrī in Schubarth-Engelschall 1967: 48.

<sup>45</sup> Which can be identified as il-Gaṣar (Baḥariyya), Qaṣr al-Farāfira, an-Ṣaṣr (Dakhla). There is no evidence of a castle in Kharga. These castles are also mentioned in Al-Mas‘ūdi and Al-Bakrī (Hivernel 1996: 41, 44).

<sup>46</sup> The ending *-ūn* in proper names as in ‘Abdūn is typically Maghrebi, cf. Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Ḥafṣūn, (Singer 1984: 459/6), and he was perhaps related to this ‘Abd al-Malik.

<sup>47</sup> It is not clear whether this refers to Farafrā or all the oases. ‘Copts’ may be a misunderstanding, see Lewicki 1986: 695a.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. the ruins of Guṣūr Muḥārib close to Mandisha in Baḥariyya oasis.

served as a place of exile for rebellious Mamelukes. Anyway, three elements are well documented: a local population of Copts, the Berbers, and Maghrebi bedouin. As for anthropology, Mitwalli (1943/1953) distinguishes a northern oasis population comprising Siwa, Baḥariyya, and Farafra, from a southern population in Dakhla and Kharga, whereas dialectological features suggest there was a strong relationship between Farafra and Dakhla.

For all the oases, oral traditions show the same picture: some ancestors/families came from the east, others from the west, others had always been there. In the Baḥariyya oasis we were told that people from the Fayyūm and the region of al-Bahnasa had come to the oases, others from Upper Egypt and the west. The reference to al-Bahnasa is plausible, since the Baḥariyya oasis was formerly called *al-wāḥāt al-bahnasawiyya* ('the Bahnasa oases') and belonged to the administrative district of al-Bahnasa.<sup>49</sup> As for the west, the Maghreb, Tunis, and *as-sāgya l-ḥamra* ('the Red Water-wheel') were mentioned. The latter reference shows how prudent one has to be with genealogies, since an origin from this former Spanish colony, now a part of Morocco, is also claimed by the Libyan Jawābis bedouin of Wādi Naṭrūn, who had close links to Mandīsha in Baḥariyya and bought their dates there.<sup>50</sup> So it is conceivable that the people of Mandīsha adopted their genealogy. Since the introduction of compulsory military service under Muḥammad 'Alī in the nineteenth century, from which the bedouin were exempted, many a *fallāḥ* ('peasant farmer') has pretended to be a bedouin, cf. Awad 1954: 252.

As for Farafra, four *buṭūn* (subtribes) were mentioned as ancestors, the Rikāyba from 'Saudi Arabia',<sup>51</sup> the Ḥanānwa from Asyut, the 'Ayyādiyya from Libya,<sup>52</sup> and the Rimēḥāt from Tunisia. None of these *buṭūn* could be located, except for the Rakāyba in Jordan (Kaḥḥāla (1949) I: 443). It is doubtful whether they are identifiable with the claimed ancestor.

### 3.8.2 DIALECTS

#### 3.8.2.1 General observations

The reflex of \*q is /g/ in Baḥariyya, but /q/ in Farafra, and /ʔ/ in west Dakhla. In east Dakhla, roughly 30% of the roots elicited display only /q/ in all words derived from the same root, but 50% show evidence of /g/, whereas in Kharga about 10% of the same set of roots show a glottalized /qʔ/, compared to 90% with /g/. This hints at an old linguistic layer with /q/, later superseded in the case of Baḥariyya (see §3.1.1). /t/ in Kharga is glottalized, which relates this oasis to Upper Egypt (see §3.7.4). Also, the

<sup>49</sup> Al-Bahnasa in the Middle Ages was one of the most important towns in Middle Egypt. The ancient camel route from the Nile Valley to Baḥariyya starts from there (Fakhry 1974: 3; Bliss 1983: 44ff.).

<sup>50</sup> See Murray 1935: 280, cf. Drop and Woidich 2007: 3ff., Fakhry 1974: 38, and Bliss 1983: 77–83. According to Awad 1954: 252, the inhabitants of Farafra claim to be Arabs, which in Egyptian parlance means bedouin. For these trade relations see Mitwalli 1943/1953: 309.

<sup>51</sup> This is what informants there told us, presumably meaning the Arabian peninsula.

<sup>52</sup> Not in Griffini's list (1913: 323–52) of Libyan tribes. For in Kharga, the Shaṛābja are considered Maghārba from Libya (unpublished text).



reflex of \*g as /ğ/ is identical to that of Upper Egypt. As to syllable structure, Farafra and Dakhla show an extraordinary conservation of short open syllables after both CVC- and CvC- as in *kāmila* ‘complete (f)’, *‘arifiyyin* ‘knowing (pl)’, *rikībit* (Farafra) ~ *rikēbit* (Dakhla) ‘she mounted’, but in Baḥariyya only after CvC-, cf. *tīlima* ‘blunt’ f, whereas /i/ is elided after CVC- as in *ṭamātma* ‘a tomato’ (il-Gaṣir), the same in Kharga oasis. Contrary to the situation in the Nile Valley, but in line with Meccan and Sudani Arabic, final syllables -CvCC and -CVC in Farafra and Dakhla are treated alike when combined with a suffix: they take a vowel-initial allomorph, cf. Farafra *buwaytikīy*, *wilādiḥīy*, Dakhla *kilbiḥī*, *wilādiḥī*, cf. Cairo *wilādha* (\*wilādha) ‘her children’.

What links all the oases is the so-called *bukara*-syndrome (see §3.4.2), also common in NME<sub>1/2</sub>. A possible expansion of speakers having this feature may have started in the Fayyūm and the Bahnasa area, and may then have been brought to the oases, perhaps first to *al-wāḥāt al-bahnasiyya* (il-Baḥariyya) or maybe to all the oases at the same time. As for pattern t-I, Baḥariyya and Farafra correspond fairly closely to the western and northern Delta and NME<sub>2</sub> in not having morphological alternation in the s-stem and p-stem (e.g. *y/itḍarab*, *y/itmisik* in Baḥariyya), whereas Dakhla (*atmisāk*, *yitmisēk*) and northern Kharga (*itmasak*, *yitmasik*) show vowel alternation and correspond to SME, Cairo, and UE<sub>3</sub>. Southern Kharga, on the other hand, is like NME<sub>1</sub> in not showing alternation, but has different vowels (*y/itmasak*).

The vocalizations of pattern II in the northern oases seem to be a further development of NME and western Delta forms with one stem allomorph only and a variety of phonologically conditioned vowels: *y/ṭalla<sup>c</sup>*, *y/ṭallim*, *y/killim*, *y/fillag*, *y/duwwar*, *y/zuwwiz*,<sup>53</sup> in contrast to Dakhla and northern Kharga with two stem allomorphs and a morphological distribution of /a/ and /i/: *kallam*–*yikallim*, *killām*–*yikillēm*, and correspondingly in pattern III: *sāfar*–*yisāfir*, *safār*–*yisafēr*. Southern Kharga, on the other hand, has /a/ in patterns II and III throughout: *kallam*–*yikallam*, *sāfar*–*yisāfar*, a unique situation in Egypt (see Woidich 1989).

The verbal modifiers for the present tense, generally used in all oases, are *immi*, *imma*-, *am*-, *um*-, *mi*-, *‘ammā*-, *amā*-, all of them derived from *‘ammāl* and corresponding fairly closely to Middle Egyptian forms. The adjective pattern iCCaC (*iḥmar*, *ibyaḍ* etc.) in Baḥariyya, Farafra, eastern Dakhla, and Kharga links the oases with Middle and Upper Egypt. Demonstrative pronouns bear an Egyptian stamp both in form and syntax, but the terms for ‘which?’ are formed from a base with *na*-, cf. Dakhla *nahū*, *nahī*, *nahōm* (similar in Baḥariyya and Farafra, but not in Kharga), rather than *an*- as in the rest of Egypt. The demonstrative adverb ‘now’ is similar to Middle and Upper Egyptian forms: *duwwax*, *dīrwak* etc.

Lexicon: There are quite a number of older Egyptian lexical items preserved in the oases, but obsolete today elsewhere in Egypt. An example is *qaša<sup>c</sup>*, *yiqša<sup>c</sup>* ‘to see’, common in all the oases, and in seventeenth-century Egyptian (Davies 2013: 95 with further discussion). *qaša<sup>c</sup>* is current in Levantine dialects today.

<sup>53</sup> Tunisian Arabic displays similar types of vocalization: *kallām*/ *ykallām*, *sayyir*/ *ysayyir*, *dawweq*/ *ydawweq*, *qaššar*/ *yqaššar* (Singer 1984: 368ff.).



### 3.8.2.2 Maghrebi elements

The western realization of *ǧīm*, i.e. /ʒ/ [ʒ] dominates in Baḥariyya (except the centre/Bawīṭi), in Farafra, and it occurs in the dialect of some speakers in east Dakhla also. The assimilation of \*ʒ to a following sibilant occurs in Baḥariyya east and west, e.g. *zazma* ‘shoes’ (< \*ʒazma), *zamūs* ‘water buffalo’ (< \*ʒamūs), but in Farafra *žāhiž* (\*žāhiž) ‘ready’, cf. in Dakhla/Ismint *sammāsa* ‘sun hat’. This is also typical for eastern Algeria, Tunisia, and parts of Libya (Marçais 1977: 22). In central Baḥariyya \*ʒ and \*z have merged into /ʒ/ [ʒ] (alveolo-palatal fricative). The same applies to \*š, \*s > /s/ [ç]. In Farafra the mergers are /ʒ/ [ʒ] and /š/ [ʃ]: *šinān* ‘teeth’, *žayt* ‘oil’. This type of merger is mainly attested for Jewish Maghrebi dialects, e.g. Tunis /š/, /ʒ/, Algiers, Djerba /š/, /ʒ/ (Marçais 1977: 10), and, rarely, in Muslim ‘sedentary’ dialects in Morocco in the Beni Mellal area (in Tadla, Lévy 2009: 285), and in particular in Rabat, Fes, and Meknès by women and children (Lévy 2002: 108), and also in Algeria (El-Milia, Département Constantine, Cantineau 1960: 63). For more details see Heath 2002: 122–33. As for an Andalusian origin for this merger in Jewish dialects, see Corriente 1977: 49. The mergers of \*š and \*s, \*ʒ and \*z are also reported for south-western Saudi Arabia (Prochazka 1988c: 14–15).

The strikingly strong affrication of /t/ in Farafra as a [tʰ] close to [tʃ] cannot be attributed to the influence of the Libyan bedouin mentioned in the sources. It is mainly attested in Morocco, in some Algerian dialects (Marçais 1977: 8), in Tunisia for Nabeul and Tozeur (there even [tʃ]), as well as in the dialect of the Jews of Tripoli [tʃ]. Perhaps in Farafra right from the beginning a kind of proto-Maghrebi dialect evolved and the Maghrebi features are original and not ‘imported’.

Word stress is of the Maghrebi type in west and central Baḥariyya (Bawīṭi, il-Gašar), e.g. *žibāl* ‘mountain’, *bugār* ‘cows’ versus *žibal*, *búgar* in eastern Baḥariyya, but only if the penultimate syllable is short. Stress on the final syllable is current in Farafra, e.g. *dixál* ‘he entered’, and in Dakhla with lengthening of the vowel, e.g. *zagál* ‘he threw’, and also when the penultimate is long and closed, e.g. Farafra *žirdál* ‘bucket’, west Dakhla *girdál* ‘bucket’, *atkillám* ‘he spoke’.

In morphology, of course, the Maghrebi forms of the p-stem are of the type *niktib–niktibu* in Baḥariyya, *niktīb–niktībū* in Farafra. As a derivational prefix of the reflexive-passive and reciprocal patterns *il-* occurs in Farafra and southern Kharga in place of *it-*: *yilmali* ‘is filled’, *yilgaṭa* ‘is cut’, *yilgaššir* ‘is peeled’, *yilʿaraku* ‘they quarrel’, a feature also attested for Chad, Tripolitania, and southern Tunisia, and occasionally for Upper Egypt. *a*-type and *i*-type of verbs final *-/y/* have merged in Baḥariyya, Farafra, and west Dakhla: *binā*, *nisā* (Cairo *bana*, *nisi*) as in most Maghrebi dialects.<sup>54</sup> The active participle of the geminate verb in Farafra is, as in the Maghreb, of the Classical type, e.g. *šādd* ‘having torn’. The pronominal suffix of the 2msng *-ik* in Baḥariyya, Farafra, and west Dakhla is identical with the Tripolitanian and Tunisian forms, whereas for 2fsng *-(i)ki* is generally used: B *bētki*, *nakúlki*, *náxlki*, F *manžilkíy*, D (Ismint) *gamalkí*, *kilbikí*, *kilbitkí*, which reminds us more of Levantine Arabic (cf. ED3 also). Still more widely spread is *-ih* for the 3msng. In west Dakhla it

<sup>54</sup> Not in eastern Libyan: *ilgí*, *rumá*, *bidá* (Owens 1984: 114–15; Marçais 1977: 48).

occurs alongside *-ah*, in north Kharga as *-ih*, and in southern Kharga as an allomorph of *-u* used before the indir obj suffix: *ġibt-u* versus *ġibt-ih-lak* [ɟib'til:ak] 'I brought it to you'. Diminutives are extremely frequent and productive in all the oases; *kuwayyis* 'small glass' (B&W 1994: 423b; Singer 1984: 485 *idem*). Remarkable is *hawn/hawníy* 'here' in Farafra which at first glance reminds one of Levantine forms, but may be linked to Tunisian *hawni* ('female language', Singer 1984: 653) or the Ḥassāniyya *hūn* (i). *iḥna* as an object pronoun in Farafra is unique in Egypt, but identical usage is cited by Landberg (1913: 120) for southern Yemen, and for the Tihāma by Greenman (1979: 59), and Behnstedt (1985, maps 38, 48).

Lexicon: The following items are also Maghrebi: *ikḥal*, *ikḥāl*, *akḥāl* 'black'; B and F *dār*, *yidīr* 'to make' (according to Singer 1984: 16 typically 'bedouin' in the Maghreb), *ṭayyib* 'to cook';<sup>55</sup> B, F, and D *ʿadda* 'to go away' (Libyan); B and F *šāhi* 'tea' (Libyan), *žawž* 'two', *taftūfa* 'bakshish, tip' (Libyan); B, F, and D *bi l-ḥēl* 'very' (Libyan); F and D *tamm*, *ma-tammiš* 'there is, there is not' (*tamma*, *famma* in Tunisian). Probably of Berber origin is the B, F, and D name for 'toddy' *lābqi*, *lābgi*, *lābiqíy*, *lābigē*, which corresponds in Fezzan/Libya and Tunisia to *lāgmi*, in Tripolitania to *lāgbi* (Griffini 1913: 306), and which is also attested in Algeria (see WAD II, map 260).

### 3.9 THE ROLE OF SUBSTRATA

#### 3.9.1 CUSHITIC

No substrate phenomena in the sense of 'imperfect learning' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 38–9) are attested for the dialect of the ʿAbābda, but many lexical borrowings from Cushitic are, e.g. *ōnīk*, pl. *awannak* 'hare', as are, in morphology, the plural suffixes *-ābāt* (~ *-abāt*) as in *malakabāt* 'ghosts', *adīrābāt* 'handles of a knife', and the *-āb*, *-ēb* suffixes as in *al-Miḥammadāb* 'the offspring of Muḥammad', *baʿanēb* 'vulture'. For more details see de Jong 2002: 346–7 and Winkler 1936: 382ff.

#### 3.9.2 COPTIC

The role of Coptic has been extensively discussed in several publications. For a comprehensive account of the five alleged Coptisms in EA see Behnstedt (2006a), where a Coptic substratum is more or less excluded. The lexical impact is modest and is estimated to amount to some 300 items, mainly in agriculture and flora.

#### 3.9.3 BERBER

The shifting of *\*l > n* (also *\*l > r*) in al-Qaṣr/Dakhla, as in *\*qulla > ʿunna* 'pitcher', *\*naxla > raxra* 'palm tree', is related to Berber in Behnstedt 2004. In northern Tarift Berber in Morocco the shift is *\*l > r*, and in some Berber and Arabic dialects of the Tafilalt area in the south it is *\*l > n*.

<sup>55</sup> Also in UE<sub>3</sub>.

A strange development in the negation system in al-Mūshiyya (west Dakhla) can, tentatively, be related to a Berber substratum (Woidich 1995a), i.e. the shift *i* > *a* in fore-and-aft negation, as in *ʿandih* ‘he has’ – *ma ʿandahš* ‘he has not’. In this case, the vowel shift can easily be explained within the frame of Dakhla historical phonology. But this shift has been transferred to other cases, as in *ʿandikōm* – *ma-ʿandikāmš* ‘you (pl) have not’, and has thus become part of the system of negational morphophonemics. This resembles a Berber morphological rule according to which in negated imperatives, and in future and present sentences, the habitual verb form has to be used, e.g. *Sīwa sīsāf* > *la sasāf* ‘don’t sift!’, *ugel* > *la tagla* ‘don’t take it!’, *wən* > *la tuwan* ‘don’t climb up!’ (Laoust 1931: 51), *Nefūsi émel* > *walemmālš* ‘don’t say!’, *ékem* > *wulekkāmš* ‘don’t enter!’, *Djerba əmməl* > *wəmmālš* ‘don’t say!’. The use of this verbal form involves the replacement of the vowel in the negated form by /a/. Something similar occurs in west Dakhla. A Berber rule involving ‘change of verbal form when negated’ may have been reinterpreted by bilingual speakers of Arabic as ‘change of vowels in negated forms’ according to the *ʿandih* – *ma-ʿandahš* model. Reanalysis of rules as a feature of imperfect learning is a typical interference phenomenon in language and dialect contact.

### 3.10 CONCLUSION

It should be clear from what has been said how important the migrations and forced resettlements of Arab tribes, as well as long-distance trade routes, were for the formation of the Egyptian dialect area. Linguistic phenomena and changes do not simply move by themselves over geographical space, as dialect geography sometimes might make us believe. They are transported by speakers who are in contact with neighbouring settlements, or speakers who migrate through time and space in search of better living conditions, or for reasons of trade and commerce. We have already pointed this out in B&W 2005: 37–42 and chapter 6: 49–54.

As a matter of fact there is no dialect area in Egypt where bedouin tribes were not present in some form, and still are, and they have contributed to each area’s linguistic evolution and character through coexistence and mixing with the autochthonous population. This is supported historically in the texts handed down to us by the Arab chroniclers who tell us about the migrations, settlements, and expulsions, but partly also in local oral traditions referring to the origins and histories of the different clans of a village.

When the chroniclers inform us that one tribe left for the west and disappeared, so to speak, or that it was resettled to the south, this has often rather to be interpreted as meaning that the majority of them may have given up their original abode, but that another section stayed where they felt at home. The first Arab immigrants into Egypt were confronted with a primarily non-arabophone population, which gradually adopted the language of the invaders. Immigrants at later periods (after the twelfth century, by which time Coptic had largely died out) had to deal with Arabized natives who to some extent spoke similar dialects, but often rather distinct ones, and with whom they had to find a *modus vivendi*. These later immigrants, on the one hand,

certainly introduced into Egypt new linguistic features, but, on the other hand, they raise the question of what happened when this dialect contact led to inevitable dialect mixing and the adaptation of the two groups. We know from recent sociolinguistic research that 'When mutually intelligible, but distinct dialects of the same language come into contact, linguistic accommodation occurs' (Britain and Trudgill 1999: 245). Speakers who adapt to speakers of a different dialect may borrow phonological and lexical elements, but often the adaptation is only partial and may lead to hypo- and hyper-forms. Rules of transfer from one dialect to another are created which partly succeed in reaching the target, others overshoot it. In this way emerge interdialectal forms, the restructuring of paradigms, reallocations, grammaticalizations of lexical elements, substitution of lexemes through analytical new formations – the entire spectrum of linguistic change. And, as Britain and Trudgill (1999: 246) put it, there may appear 'new, intermediate or hyper-adaptive or other interdialect forms which were not actually present in any of the dialects in the original mixture' (see also Trudgill 1986).

This last remark is of particular importance for Arabic historical linguistics. Forms which were not actually present in the original mixture and came into existence owing to dialect contact can hardly serve as starting points for the historical derivation of features in other dialects. To give an example: at first glance Upper Egyptian forms (UE<sub>3</sub>, B<sup>eri</sup>) such as *bugara* 'a cow' (from *bagaṛ* 'cows') or *nizilat* 'she came down' (from *nazal* 'he came down') look archaic and could lend themselves to being interpreted as having given rise to forms common in 'bedouin' dialects, e.g. *bgara*, *nzilat* (cf. Jastrow 1982: 131ff.). This derivation ignores, however, essential aspects. Interpreting *nizilat* as archaic does not explain why these modified high vowels are never elided in UE<sub>3</sub> – whereas other high vowels are, see 'ifš 'bad' and f 'ifša – and, on the other hand, why vowel modification spreads to structures other than CvCvCv, namely CvCCvCv, cf. *mimlika* 'kingdom'. Both phenomena can be explained if one interprets vowel modification as a secondary innovation, as hypo- and hyper-adaptation triggered by dialect contact (see Woidich 1997: 192–6). If such forms are used for historical reconstruction they may lead us astray.

Other examples to be adduced here include the *aktib*–*niktib* system in one area of the Egyptian Delta, as this could be the outcome of such a dialect contact, as pointed out in §3.3.1; and the dialects of the four Egyptian oases, which differ from each other considerably. Consider the mixture of /g/ and /q/ for \*q in Farafra, Dakhla, and Kharga (see §3.8.2.1), or the strange allomorphs for the 3msng poss suffix -u (word final) and -ih- (word internal with indirect object suffixes) in Baris/south Kharga (see §3.8.2.2): *bētu* 'his house', *ġibtillak* < \*ġibtihlak 'I brought it to you'. They show highly archaic features on one hand, but extremely idiosyncratic new formations on the other, in the case of Dakhla and Kharga even inside the oasis itself. Precisely there, in a relatively small area, several groups from different regions with different dialects melded with the local population until they homogenized linguistically. In the historical analysis of Arabic dialect phenomena, one cannot always assume that a feature was introduced from the original home of the speakers and implanted somewhere. One should also entertain the possibility that a given feature is the result of dialect mixing and dialect contact which eventually led to new dialects and dialect areas.

# The adnominal linker *-an* in Andalusī Arabic, with special reference to the poetry of Ibn Quzmān (twelfth century)

IGNACIO FERRANDO

وجهاً مليح وشراباً أصفر:

الغايّ ذي لس لُقْدَام أَكْثَر

‘A beautiful face and a golden wine:  
That is the goal, there is nothing more’

*Dīwān Ibn Quzmān* (abbreviated to IQ) 53/o/1 and 53/o/2

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known fact that a number of Arabic dialects have a nominal suffix *-an/-in* after an indefinite noun if that noun is followed by an attribute or modifier; one such dialect was Andalusī Arabic. For example:

- (1) فُتِنْتُ بِلَوْنِ نَبِيلٍ  
*futin-tu bi-lawn-an nabīl*  
 seduce.s-stem.ps-1sng by-colour-linker noble  
 ‘I have been seduced by a noble complexion’ (IQ 145/1/2)

The noun *lawn* ‘colour’ has no definite article and is followed by the adjective *nabīl* ‘noble’, which serves as a modifying attribute. A first reading of this structure seems to indicate that the suffix *-an* attached to the indefinite noun acts as a linker between the two elements. The attribute may, as in this example, be an adjective, or a participle acting as an adjective. But there are also cases in which the attributed element is a relative clause without the marker of a relative clause, as is normal in Arabic when the antecedent noun is indefinite:

- (2) لَش تَجْتَمَع مِثَاقًا تَتَوَفَّرُ؟  
*laš taġtamaʿ maṭāqil-an tatwaffar?*  
 why 2sng- hoard.p-stem golden guineas-linker 2sng-save.p-stem  
 ‘Why do you hoard golden guineas which you save?’ (IQ 31/6/4)

A third, less common possibility is that the attribute consists of a prepositional phrase:

- (3) وَفِي خَدَيْهَا وَرْدَةٌ كَالْحَيَا  
*wa-fi xadd-ay-hā wardat-an ka-l-ḥayā*  
 and-in cheek-du-3fsng rose-linker like-def.a.-shame  
 ‘In her cheeks there is a rose like shame’ (IQ 87/11/1)

Some researchers<sup>1</sup> call this adnominal linker morpheme *tanwīn* or *dialectal tanwīn*, owing to its superficial similarity to the morpheme of indefiniteness of CLA, which appears both on the head noun and on the modifying attribute, and view it as the remains of an old system of cases and/or as a nominal marker of indefiniteness. Others<sup>2</sup> prefer to call it a *connective tanwīn*, in view of its function in the dialect material under analysis, or a *nominal linker*, or simply a *linker -n* (Owens 1998a: 215–17; 2006: 102). In this chapter we opt for the term *adnominal linker*, which we consider more appropriate for a synchronic analysis of the linguistic facts.

As regards the geographical distribution of the adnominal linker, it is found in many very different geographical areas of the Arabic-speaking world. First, it appears in various modern dialects which we might describe as ‘central’, such as those of central and eastern Arabia, including Bahrain (Holes 2004b), Qatar (Bettega 2014), and Yemen (Tihāma) (Behnstedt 1985: 60), and even in ‘bedouin’ dialects of other areas, such as Sinai or Jordan (Holes and Abu Athera 2009: 214–19). Secondly, it is very striking that the same trait, with variable profiles and characteristics, also appears in a number of dialects we might describe as ‘geographically and socially peripheral’, such as Andalusī Arabic (Corriente 1977: 122; 2013a: 100; Ferrando 2000), used in Spain between the seventh and sixteenth centuries, Siculo-Arabīc (La Rosa 2016: 362–4), the texts of what is known as Christian Arabic,<sup>3</sup> the Judaeo-Arabīc of various areas and times (Blau 1981: 167–212), the Arabic of Sudan (Owens 1993b: 111, 140, 144), that of Nigeria (Owens 2006: 103), that of Uzbekistan (Ingham 2010: 81–7), and that of Afghanistan (Ingham 2006: 33–4). The fact that the same trait appears documented in the core dialects of the Arabian peninsula and in other dialects so far removed in time and space from the Arabic geographical centre suggests, as Owens (1998a: 216–17; 2006: 105–6) and Holes (2011a: 81–2) claim,

<sup>1</sup> Blau (1981: 167–212), who uses the data of Baneth 1945–6, and more recently Holes 2004b, among others, though Holes has since modified his position (Holes 2011a: 81–2; 2016: 131–4) and now prefers the term ‘adnominal linker’.

<sup>2</sup> Corriente 1977: 122, and more recently Ferrando (2000), who uses the French term, *morphème de liaison*.

<sup>3</sup> Blau 1966–7: 340–2; 1993. It is not, however, present in the Middle Arabic of the Muslims, at least not in early times, according to Hopkins 1984: 169.

that this is an ancient trait from the period before the Arab diaspora which followed the Muslim conquests.

The object of this chapter is to analyse this adnominal linker in detail in Andalusi Arabic, the only neo-Arabic dialect bundle, together with Judeo-Arabic and Middle Arabic, to have left us complete texts, which represent a veritable jewel for the diachronic study of the Arabic dialects. The source we will analyse is the poetry of Ibn Quzmān, who wrote in Cordoba in the twelfth century the celebrated *dīwān Ibn Quzmān*, a collection of popular poetry in which the use of the adnominal linker is noticeably widespread. The most interesting aspects of the analysis will be its syntactic distribution; the different categories of head noun and attribute on which it appears; the form of writing of the linker, either as a separate word or as a morpheme which forms part of the spelling of the head noun; and whether it is optional or obligatory.

## 4.2 THE CORPUS

The *dīwān* of Ibn Quzmān al-Qurṭubī is a collection of strophic popular poetry written in al-Andalus in the twelfth century. Given that the language used consciously by the author is the local Andalusi dialect, the *dīwān* constitutes a very rich source for the study of the Andalusi dialect, and one of the few relics of a neo-Arab dialect used in writing in the medieval period.

Ibn Quzmān (full name: Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿĪsā ibn ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿĪsā ibn Quzmān al-Zuhri al-Zajjāl al-Aṣghar) was born in Cordoba to a wealthy and quite prestigious family which, judging by its name, Quzmān (= Guzmán), may have been of non-Muslim origin, perhaps Gothic. In fact the external information available on his life is very limited and fragmented,<sup>4</sup> and we are thus obliged, exercising the necessary caution, to use the internal evidence provided by his poetry. Ibn Quzmān was a poet versed in Classical Arabic (CLA) poetry, but his fame was due to the poetical genre known as *zağal*, i.e. strophic poems written in the vernacular language of Al-Andalus, generally in the form of panegyrics dedicated to various patrons of the Almoravid dynasty. He himself tells us he visited Andalusian cities such as Seville, Granada, and Jaen, looking for local governors to pay him for his poems. One of the more prominent traits of his poetry is a satirical, even licentious vein, which is to be seen throughout his *dīwān*, including various ruthless satires of doctors of Islamic law (*alfaquís*). According to his poems, he was accused and convicted of impiety on more than one occasion, although it is open to doubt whether this is true or merely a rhetorical device by which he seeks to ingratiate himself with the reader.

His masterpiece is the collection of *zağals* entitled *Iṣābat al-ağrād fī dīkr al-aʿrād* (*Dīwān Ibn Quzmān al-Qurṭubī*). This work has come down to us in a single copy produced in the Middle East, probably in the area of Palestine, which is preserved in the library of St. Petersburg, Russia. It consists of 149 strophic poems (*zağals*) written

<sup>4</sup> See more details in Ferrando 2006: 416–24.



in the Andalusī Arab dialect.<sup>5</sup> Most of the poems are dedicated to the patrons of the time, that is, to the leaders of the Almoravid dynasty. The set of poems, a masterpiece of popular Arab poetry, offers a lively panorama of the social life of the Islamic and Arab city of Cordoba in the twelfth century, including many details and comments on local customs, biting criticism of the religious authorities, and descriptions of licentious and lewd activities, including explicit sex scenes of both heterosexual and homosexual natures. It is also a source of great interest for documenting relations between Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

But perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the *dīwān* of Ibn Quzmān is the language and style used in it. This is a popular, lively, and nimble language which reflects the real life of Cordovan society, completely opposite to the hyper-classical tendencies which dominated the formal poetry of that time and place. From a linguistic point of view the work of Ibn Quzmān is a treasure trove, as it constitutes a rare vestige of the Andalusī dialect and shows us a range of expressions and a popular lexicon to which we would not have had access if this work had not been preserved. In addition to this, the *dīwān* is also the first substantial collection of a literary genre (*zağal*) with a particular strophic and metrical structure which literary critics consider of great importance in the history of relations between Arab and Romance literature.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the language of Ibn Quzmān authentically reflects a morphology, a syntax, and a lexicon which are entirely colloquial, as the author states with pride in the introduction to the work where he says specifically, for example, that the use of desinential inflection (*iʿrāb*), one of the hallmarks of CLA, is an unforgivable error in the *zağal*:

وصَفَيْتُهُ عَنِ الْغَقْدِ الَّتِي تَشْبِيهِ، وَسَهَّلْتُه حَتَّى لَانَ مَلْمَسُهُ وَرَقَّ خَشْبُهُ، وَعَذَّبْتُهُ مِنَ  
(p. 27) الْإِعْرَابِ، وَعَزَّيْتُهُ مِنَ التَّحَالُفِ وَالْإِصْطِلَاحَاتِ تَجْرِيدِ السَّيْفِ مِنَ الْقِرَابِ.

I freed it of the knots which spoiled it [= the *zağal*], smoothing out its texture and softening its roughness. I stripped it bare of inflection (*iʿrāb*), ornamentation and convention, as if drawing a sword from its scabbard

(p. 30) وَلَيْسَ اللَّحْنُ فِي الْكَلَامِ الْمَعْرَبِ أَوْ الْمَوْشَّحِ بِأَقْبَحَ مِنَ الْإِعْرَابِ فِي الزَّجْلِ

Failing to observe the rules of inflection (*iʿrāb*) in Classical Arabic diction, or in formal stanzaic poetry (*muwašṣaḥ*), is no less ugly than observing these rules in popular verse (*zağal*)...

The author is clearly telling us that the language of his poems lacks the desinential inflection, and that it is the spoken language of the street, the Andalusī dialect (though paradoxically he makes these statements in a stylistically ornamented CLA!). We should, however, add a caveat: as it is a poetic text, and therefore written in a literary register, it is obvious that the language has to be adapted to a series of conditioning factors, including the requirements of metre and rhyme. That means

<sup>5</sup> In the edition I have consulted, edited by Corriente, (Ibn Quzmān 2013), the number of poems rises to 193, the last forty-four being gathered from other sources. The corpus consists of a total of 71,705 words. I would like to express my most sincere thanks to Professor Corriente for having provided me with an electronic copy of the complete text of the *dīwān*, which has greatly assisted my task of analysis and research.



it is likely that there will be linguistic adjustments throughout the corpus and occasional breaches of normal dialectal grammatical rules. If we take that into account it is easy to understand, for example, that some cases in which the poet has not used the expected adnominal linker are simply to adjust the wording of a verse to the number of syllables required, or to accommodate the verse to the metrical pattern of each *zağal*, which leads the author in some cases to use forms which are unorthodox but metrically necessary. However, it should be stated that the adnominal linker, together with other dialectal traits, is used so consistently throughout the corpus that it may be said without any doubt that the language of Ibn Quzmān is, in this sense, an authentic reflection of popular language. Despite the presence of some classicisms, and an unavoidable raising of tone, we take the view that the analysis of the linguistic material of the *diwān* allows us to draw valid conclusions on the state of Andalusī Arabic in the place where and at the time when the poems were written.

### 4.3 THE ADNOMINAL LINKER *-an* IN IQ

A detailed reading of the *diwān* of Ibn Quzmān shows a total of 464 cases of the adnominal linker. Compared to that abundant use there are sixty-four cases in which the adnominal linker would be expected to be present but for various reasons does not appear. These cases of absence will be dealt with shortly. For the moment, we will try to specify the profiles and syntactic uses of nominal phrases the head noun of which is indefinite, which are precisely the cases in which the adnominal linker appears.

#### 4.3.1 HEAD NOUNS BY TYPE

Table 4.1 shows the statistics for types of head noun in terms of gender and number.

**TABLE 4.1 Ibn Quzmān's poetry: frequency of head nouns by gender and number**

msg	387
fsng	38
broken pl (of m or f singulars)	29
sound fpl	3
dual m	0
dual f <sup>6</sup>	7
Total	464

<sup>6</sup> Of the seven cases of feminine dual head noun, six are the noun *ʿayn* 'eye', which is feminine but has no external morphological gender marker, the other case being the noun *ṣaxra* 'rock'.

It is instructive to present some examples of head nouns in the broken pl, sound fpl, and f dual, in which the noun ends with an *alif* completely absent from the tradition of CLA writing, giving rise to forms which are striking to the informed reader:

- (4) مصائباً عظام  
*maṣāyib-an*                      ʿiṣām  
 misfortune.b.pl-linker great  
 ‘Great misfortunes’ (IQ 27/9/2)<sup>7</sup>
- (5) أناملأ برئة من اللوم  
*anāmil-an*                      bariyya      min      al-lawm  
 finger tip.b.pl-linker innocent from def.a-blame  
 ‘Fingers free of blame’ (IQ 45/6/1)
- (6) شفيفاتاً يطول فيها الاعتبار  
*šufayf-āt-an*                      yaṭūl                      fī-ha      l-iʿtibār  
 small lip-f.s.pl-linker 3sng-be long.p-stem in-them def.a-pondering  
 ‘Small lips which would be pondered long’ (IQ 37/2/1)
- (7) وصفيفاتاً صفيقة  
*wa-šufayf-āt-an*                      šafiqa  
 and-small slap-f.s.pl-linker hard  
 ‘Small hard slaps’ (IQ 87/7/4)<sup>8</sup>
- (8) بصخرتين ان مصاب  
*bi-šaxrat-ayn-an*                      muṣāb  
 by-rock-f.du-linker injured  
 ‘Injured by a pair of rocks’ (IQ 21/2/4)<sup>9</sup>
- (9) عينيناً ملاح  
*ʿayn-ayn-an*                      milāḥ  
 eye-du-linker beautiful  
 ‘Beautiful eyes’ (IQ 135/0/2)
- (10) وحواجباً رفاق على عينيناً شهل  
*wa-ḥawāḡib-an*                      riqāq      ʿala      ʿayn-ayn-an      šuhal  
 and-eyebrow.b.pl-linker fine over eye-du-linker blue  
 ‘With fine eyebrows over blue eyes’ (IQ 56/10/3)

All of these examples are notable as they depart from the morphological rules of CLA in which these types of plural and dual nouns never have *tanwīn* represented, as here, by an orthographic suffixed *alif*, or in the case of (8) by *-an* written as a separate word.

<sup>7</sup> For the translation of the examples, we have used the Spanish translation made by Corriente (Ibn Quzmān 1996).

<sup>8</sup> These last two cases are diminutives, which are frequently to be found in the *dīwān*.

<sup>9</sup> Note the writing of the adnominal linker, which appears written as a separate word, and not as a letter added to the head noun, as is more usual.

It should also be pointed out that the adnominal linker bears no relation to the system of case in CLA, as Owens (2006: 104) and Holes (2011a: 81) have noted. As it appears in our source it could be interpreted as the indefinite accusative morpheme, but that would be incorrect, as it is frequently used in cases in which the head noun is in the nominative or genitive case, in which, according to the rules of CLA, an *alif* suffixed to the head noun is incorrect. Here are some examples (there are more than 100 cases in the *dīwān*):

- (11) في داراً خالية  
*fī dār-an xāliya*  
 in house-linker empty  
 'In an empty house' (IQ 10/9/4)
- (12) بكلاماً فصيح  
*bi-kalām-an faṣīḥ*  
 with-speech-linker eloquent  
 'With eloquent words' (IQ 9/38/2)
- (13) إلى يوماً يلقي علي التراب  
*ila yawm-an yulqa ʿalayy at-turāb*  
 until day-linker 3msng-throw.p-stem.ps on-me def.a-earth  
 'Until the day I am buried by earth' (IQ 21/5/4)
- (14) من ل ثوباً يُغسل  
*man lu tawb-an yuḡsal*  
 who to-him clothes-linker 3msng-wash.p-stem.ps  
 'Whoever has clothes to be washed' (IQ 137/6/1)
- (15) الغايَ ذي لس لُقْدَامَ أَكْثَر: وَجْهًا مَلِيحَ وَشَرَابًا أَصْفَر  
*al-ḡāya dī las li-quddām-u akṭar*  
 def.a-goal that neg to-before-it more  
*waḡh-an malīḥ wa-šarāb-an aṣfar*  
 face-linker beautiful and-wine-linker golden  
 'A beautiful face and a golden wine:  
 That is the goal, there is nothing more than that' (IQ 53/0/1 and 2)<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.3.2 ADJUNCTS BY TYPE

From a syntactic point of view there are three types of adjunct: an adjective or participle functioning as an adjective; a relative clause, also functioning as an adjective; and a prepositional phrase which makes some modification to the head noun but which maintains a somewhat less close syntactic relation with it. Table 4.2 shows the frequency of each one of the three types of adjunct.

<sup>10</sup> In this case the nominal syntagm is in the nominative position, unlike the examples 11, 12, 13, and 14, where its position was genitive.

TABLE 4.2. Ibn Quzmān's poetry:  
frequency of types of nominal adjunct

adj (or participle)	317
rel clause	134
prep phrase	13
Total	464

We have already seen many cases in which the adjunct is an adjective or participle in the examples given earlier. As regards the second case, relative clauses,<sup>11</sup> it should be borne in mind that these are constructed in Arabic without any relative marker given that the antecedent, the head noun, appears as indefinite. This means that the syntactic connection between the head noun and the relative adjunct is closer, given that an indefinite noun is not usually found in a prepausal position:<sup>12</sup> the listener expects something to complete it, something which provides information about the head noun. Here are some examples:

- (16) لس نخشى همأ يجي إليّ  
ولا زماناً يجور عليّ  
*las naxša hamm-an yağī ilayy*  
neg 1sng-fear.p-stem trouble-linker 3msng-come.p-stem to-me  
*wa-lā zaman-an yağūr ʿalayy*  
and-neg times-linker 3msng-oppress.p-stem on-me  
'I don't fear troubles that approach me,  
nor times that oppress me'<sup>13</sup>
- (17) يا زماناً قد باد  
*yā zamān-an qad bād*  
o time-linker perf.part pass.s-stem-3msng  
'O for a time that has passed!' (IQ 32/2/1)
- (18) يوماً لا نسقيه نخاف ييبس  
*yawm-an la nasqī-h naxāf*  
day-linker neg 1sng-give drink.p-stem-3msng 1sng-fear.p-stem  
*yaybas*  
3msng-dry.p-stem  
'Any day I don't give it [= my heart] something to drink, I fear it will go dry'  
(IQ 182/1/2)

<sup>11</sup> Of the examples given, 2, 6, 13, and 14 are cases of a relative clause in an adjunct position.

<sup>12</sup> Except, of course, nouns adverbialized by the CLA accusative ending -an, such as *ʿabadan*, *tamāman*, *ʿaydan*, etc.

<sup>13</sup> Given that the head noun in this example occupies the accusative position, as the direct object of the verb, one might be tempted to interpret the morpheme -an as the accusative marker of CLA, and not as an adnominal linker. But the first two words of the verse, i.e. *las* (mark of negation) and *naxša* (p-stem, 1sng), are so clearly dialectal that this reading must be discounted.

The third type of adjunct is a prepositional phrase which provides circumstantial information, such as the place or the mode of some kind of comparison. This is the least frequent of the three types of adjunct. Only thirteen cases were found.

- (19) ناراً بقلبه يريد يطفئه  
*nār-an bi-qalb-uh yirīd yaṭfī-h*  
 fire-linker in-heart-3msng 3msng-want.p-stem 3msng-put out.p-stem-3msng  
 'Fire in his heart that he wants to put out' (IQ 74/2/3)
- (20) لس في النساء زينته يحالك  
*las fī n-nisā zīnat-an bi-ḥāl-ak*  
 neg in def.a-women beauty-linker in-condition-2fsng  
 'There is no beauty among women like yours' (IQ 115/8/2)
- (21) صديقة للروح، ذاك الذي تدري  
*ṣadiqa-t-an la-r-rūḥ, ḍāk alladī tadri*  
 friend-f-linker to-def.a-soul dem rel 2msng-know.p-stem  
 'A dear friend, that one who you know of' (IQ 125/6/2)

Although there are not many cases of prepositional phrases to be found they are quite significant, as the syntactic relation between the head noun and the attribute is less close than in the cases of the other two types of adjunct (adjective and relative clause). This favours the interpretation that the main function of the suffix is that of a linker or ligature and not a marker of indefiniteness.

It is also interesting to note that the Andalusī Arabic of IQ seems closer in this regard to contemporary 'bedouin' dialects, in which there is relatively frequent use of the adnominal linker with prepositional phrases, than to Judeo-Arabic texts, which are closer to Andalusī from a chronological point of view, in which the adnominal linker with prepositional phrase is comparatively rare, according to Blau 1981: 175.<sup>14</sup> At least that is the impression to be gathered from the analysis offered by him (1981: 195–6) and from the bedouin poetical data of Holes and Abu Athera (2009: 214–19).

#### 4.3.3 THE WRITING OF THE ADNOMINAL LINKER

Given that the dialectal adnominal linker is a linguistic trait which does not belong to the basic structures of Classical Arabic, its written representation presents something of a challenge and a breach of the normal rules of writing. The solution adopted in the *diwān* of Ibn Quzmān, or at least that which appears in the single manuscript which has come down to us, is that of adding to the head noun an *alif* of prolongation, which is the system used in CLA for marking *tanwīn* orthographically when it is in the accusative case. It is a solution which is not, in principle, strange in the eyes of Arab readers. There are, however, certain types of nouns in CLA which never take the suffix *tanwīn*. These are the diptotic nouns. And it is in these cases that there is a clear break with the CLA rules, as the *alif* is regularly used with them. We have already

<sup>14</sup> See also examples 48 and 57 of Baneth 1945–6.

noted in examples 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 the use of *alif* with diptotic broken plurals, duals, and sound feminine plurals, which are categories of noun which in CLA either do not use *tanwīn* at all, or, if they do, never take the accusative form of *tanwīn* in -an marked by *alif*. The same is true of other categories of diptote, such as colour adjectives:

- (22) يا أسوداً مظيار  
*yā aswad-an miṭyār*  
 o black-linker omen  
 'Oh, what a black omen!' (IQ 147/6/5)

Ibn Quzmān is quite consistent in his use of the *alif* to represent the link morpheme. But there is also sporadic use of *an* written as an independent word, a trait which also appears in Judaeo-Arabic<sup>15</sup> and in Middle Arabic.<sup>16</sup> Apart from example 8 we find only two other examples:

- (23) وصرتُ حطام ان سحت يابس  
*wa-ṣir-tu huṭām-an saḥti yābis*  
 and-become.s-stem-1sng ruin-linker feeble dry  
 'I have become a feeble, dry ruin' (IQ 1/3/2)
- (24) فقي ان خمار من روعي نعمل  
*faqīy-an xammār min rūḥ-ī naʿmal*  
 jurispudent-linker wine-selling from self-1sng 1sng-make.p-stem  
 'I will make of myself a wine-selling jurispudent!' (IQ 23/5/1)<sup>17</sup>

This way of representing graphically the adnominal linker, as it is totally divorced from the CLA orthographic convention, seems more appropriate for distinguishing clearly between the orthography of the CLA *tanwīn* when it marks an indefinite accusative and the function of dialectal -an as a link morpheme. It does not, however, seem to have been the principal option chosen by Ibn Quzmān, possibly owing to the pressure of the orthographic conventions of CLA.<sup>18</sup>

In fsng nouns which end in the suffix *tāʾ marbūṭa* there is a higher degree of graphemic ambiguity, as the adnominal linker is shown only by the presence of superscript orthographic symbols which do not affect the consonantal skeleton of the text (i.e., no *alif*). The same is true of nouns ending with *alif* + *hamza* or *alif maqṣūra*. With nouns of this type, the manuscript generally contains the superscript symbols which make it possible to read the link morpheme, although there is a certain degree of ambivalence which has led the editor to restore missing symbols in a few cases. This is what we might call the 'hidden writing' of the adnominal linker. A few examples should serve to clarify this:

<sup>15</sup> According to Blau (1993: 97), who records a use of *an* as a separate word in the year 800.

<sup>16</sup> According to the data of Hopkins 1984: 175.

<sup>17</sup> It should be noted that the manuscript uses اني instead of ان, but the editor corrects this in view of the sense and metre of the poem.

<sup>18</sup> This is not the case in another interesting source of Andalusī Arabic, the *Vocabulista in Arabico*, dating back to the thirteenth century, where an independent ʾan (ان) is consistently used to reflect the adnominal linker. See some examples in Schiaparelli 1871: 459–60, *sub voce litera*.

- (25) وکلّ جماعة لا تشرب  
*wa-kull ġamāʿat-an la tašrab*  
 and-every group-linker neg 3fsng-drink.p-stem  
 'every group that does not drink' (IQ 23/4/3)<sup>19</sup>
- (26) ويجي فيها كساء بداري  
*wa-yaġī fī-hā kisā-an badārī*  
 and-3msg-come.p-stem in-3fsng bed cover-linker new  
 'In this will come a new bed cover' (IQ 20/17/4)<sup>20</sup>

#### 4.3.4 FREQUENCY OF THE ADNOMINAL LINKER AND CASES OF ABSENCE

Owens, Holes, and Bettega point to two fundamental features of the dialectal adnominal linker. The first is that it has nothing to do with the case system, unlike the *tanwīn* of CLA. The analysis of the corpus of IQ confirms this fact. The single form of the morpheme, represented in Andalusī Arabic always by the letters *-an*, and its constant use regardless of syntactic functions, whether the noun to which it is attached is nominative, accusative, or genitive, shows clearly that there is no case system represented by this morpheme. The absence of hypercorrections, of classicisms,<sup>21</sup> or of attempts to reflect in the poems of IQ the case markers of CLA confirms that this is not, in our opinion, a remnant of the case system.

The second trait various researchers have referred to in the adnominal linker is that it is always optional. Blau, Owens, Holes, and Bettega agree fully on this.<sup>22</sup> However, the data offered by the Andalusī Arabic dialect in the oldest sources, from around the twelfth century, present a different picture, which suggests to those who have examined these materials that it is a very frequent trait,<sup>23</sup> or even

<sup>19</sup> The mark of the adnominal linker appears in this way in the manuscript and is presented thus by the editor.

<sup>20</sup> In this case the vocalization of the manuscript is not so unequivocal but the metre of the poem confirms the reading of the suffix *-an*.

<sup>21</sup> Naturally there are some classicisms, although quite scarce, detected by Corriente in his edition. In the area of the adnominal linker only certain cases can be referred to, such as that of 113/2/4, which reads: قری ورداً عجیباً 'you will see a prodigious rose which has appeared', in which the suffix *-an* is joined to the attribute in the Classical manner. But these cases can be counted on the fingers of one hand, given the effort made by Ibn Quzmān to use the dialect in his poems, as he states in the introduction.

<sup>22</sup> Owens states (2006: 104), referring basically to Nigerian Arabic: 'it is always optional'. Holes (2011a: 81), for his part, puts it this way, referring to the adnominal linker in central and eastern Arabia: '... always optional and to some extent therefore a stylistic marker'. In his study of the Arabic of Qatar, Bettega (2014: 19–20) says: 'It has to be noted that the vast majority of indefinite nouns followed by adjectives show no sign of dialectal *tanwīn*. We already insisted on the fact that this feature always appears to be optional'. As regards the Judaeo-Arabic dialects with the presence of the adnominal linker, Blau (1981: 167) also says 'the use of which [*tanwīn*] is always optional'.

<sup>23</sup> In his first comprehensive grammar of Andalusī Arabic, Corriente (1977: 121) stated the following: 'It is not uncommon in the earliest Andalusī documents to find /+an+/ between the ultimate constituents of a nominal phrase, as a marker of their relation', providing various examples taken from IQ. In his new

quasi-obligatory.<sup>24</sup> It should be pointed out that in Andalusī Arabic, as in other forms of Arabic, the register of the language used in poetry may not be the same as that of ordinary speech (in part because it is self-consciously ‘artistic’, in part because of the demands of metre), and that the adnominal linker, specifically, has been shown to be more common in poetic language than in ordinary speech in the modern dialects of Arabic that have retained it (e.g. the dialects of eastern and central Arabia).<sup>25</sup> If we take into consideration the clear distinction between poetic usage and spoken usage, it would not be safe to assume that the adnominal linker is a nearly obligatory feature in spoken, ordinary Andalusī Arabic. It would be safer to say that it is a common feature of poetry, as it is in the case of present-day Arabian bedouin poetry. However, in the case of Andalusī Arabic, we also have a contemporary source of non-poetic data that seems to show that the linker was just as common in that as it is in the poetry. This is the so-called *Vocabulista in Arabico*,<sup>26</sup> written in the east of Al-Andalus. It is an Arabic–Latin and Latin–Arabic glossary, in a ‘middle’ register, where researchers have found many dialect features together with some classical material. In this work, the adnominal linker is very frequent.<sup>27</sup> As this is a glossary produced with the goal of learning Arabic in order to Christianize Muslim people in Spain after the Reconquista, there is no poetical language in it. So we are inclined to think that the adnominal linker reflects a living usage of that time, and not just a poetical stylistic matter (which could also be true, of course), but a more widespread trait present in other areas of language. It is difficult to decide if ordinary Andalusian speech actually included it, but the *Vocabulista in Arabico* provides at least a hint pointing in that direction. Add to that the fact that the Andalusī materials are quite early in comparison with the modern Arabian material, which may mean they reflect a stage of the language which once also existed in Arabia, but of which we simply have no contemporary record.

If we examine the statistical data at the beginning of §4.3, we find the adnominal linker is present in 87.8% of cases (464 occurrences out of 528). But if we examine the cases of absence more closely we see that in many of them there is a reason for this absence. The first of these is a reason linked to the metre of the poem. We have found nine cases in which the head noun appears in the position immediately before the verse’s internal caesura, a pausal position, and the phonetic link between the head noun and the adjunct is broken. The following is an example:

grammar of Andalusī Arabic Corriente (2013a: 100) states: ‘So, we still find it most of the time in VA [*Vocabulista in Arabico*, a twelfth-century Andalusī source]... and quite often in IQ’.

<sup>24</sup> Ferrando (2000: 31) says the following: ‘Ce que nous pouvons déduire du comportement du ML [adnominal linker] dans les sources du 12<sup>th</sup> siècle c’est qu’il s’agit d’un trait presque obligatoire que l’on n’oblitére pas sans peine’.

<sup>25</sup> Bedouin poets who make extensive use of the linker say that its use gives an impression of *aṣāla* (=‘(bedouin) authenticity’) to their poetry (thanks to Holes, p.c.).

<sup>26</sup> See the first edition by Schiaparelli (1871) and the linguistic study by Corriente (1989a).

<sup>27</sup> In a previous paper, Ferrando 2000, I stated that the frequency rises as high as 86.73%.



(27)

ماعي أنا معشوق شاطّ ابيض اشقر:  
ريت القمر بالليل؟ هو يلمع اكثر

*māʿ-i anā maʿšūq šāṭṭ abyad ašqar*  
with-1sng I beloved tall pale blonde  
*ray-t al-qamar bil-layl huwa yalmaʿ*  
see.s-stem-2msng def.a-moon in-def.a-night he 3msng-shine.p-stem  
*aḵṭar*  
more  
'I have a tall, pale, blonde beloved  
Have you seen the full moon? He shines more' (IQ 13/01 and 13/02)

In this verse there is a clear internal caesura which separates the head noun *maʿšūq* from the adjunct *šāṭṭ*, and hence the linking morpheme cannot be inserted between them.

The second reason for the occasional absence of the adnominal linker is that the copier of the *dīwān*, who was probably a Mashreqi Arab, did not include it in the manuscript, probably as it was a trait absent from his own dialect. In these cases we are helped by the metre of the poems, described and studied in minute detail by Corriente.<sup>28</sup> Our analysis of this particular aspect shows nine cases of absence of the adnominal linker in which the metre of the poem requires it. The following is an example:

(28)

شربة رقيقة ومعشوق  
*šurayba raqīqah wa-maʿšūq*  
wine fine and-beloved  
'A fine wine and a beloved one! (IQ 45/0/1)

The metrical scheme of the poem is, in our opinion, *mustafʿilun mustafʿilun faʿūl*.<sup>29</sup> In any event, as may be seen in the verses (29)–(32), the sequence of each one of them consists of ten syllables,<sup>30</sup> while in the verse quoted here there are only nine. The logical way of completing the metre of the poem is to restore the adnominal linker between the head noun and the adjunct, giving *šuraybat-an raqīqa wa-maʿšūq*, which would seem to us the correct reading.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> In the edition used, the metrical scheme used by IQ is indicated at the start of each poem.

<sup>29</sup> i.e. the *rağaz* metre in its short version (*mağzūʿ ar-rağaz*). The proposal of Corriente is slightly different (*mustafʿilun faʿūlun faʿūlun*), but the type of metre is not altered (also *rağaz*), nor the number of syllables in each verse (ten).

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, the third verse of the poem: كان الحبيب إلى قلبي، لو كان، in which there are without any doubt ten syllables, not nine.

<sup>31</sup> In some cases, such as that of 19/2/2, the editor restores the adnominal linker and includes it in the text, but in other cases this is not so and it goes unnoticed. It should also be noted that there are yet other cases in which the manuscript contains the adnominal linker, but the editor has removed it from the text as it did not conform to the metre. For example in 69/11/4, where the verse in the manuscript appears thus: وترى حديدات صباح، but Corriente proposes not to read the adnominal linker, as if it is read the verse has one syllable too many to fit the metre. In the interests of fairness we have taken these as cases of absence of the adnominal linker.

A third reason for the absence of the adnominal linker is the head noun's being the noun *šī* 'something, a thing', which has lost its referential value as a noun and has become an indefinite quantifier. Of the four cases found the following is given as an example:

- (29) وذا شي قد تحقّقه يا ابني كل من في البلد  
*wa-ḏā šī qad tiḥaqqaq-uh yā bn-ī*  
 and-dem thing perf.part confirm.s-stem-3mnsng-3msng o son-1sng  
*kull man fi l-balad*  
 all who in def.a-town  
 'My son, this is something everyone in town confirms to be true' (IQ 173/3/3)

Something similar occurs where this *šī* is contained in negative structures, where it has been grammaticalized and functions as a particle of negation. Since it has lost its referential value as a noun, it is logical for there to be no adnominal linker. We have found four cases of this negative *šī* in the corpus. The following is an example:

- (30) لم تخذ شي باطل  
*lam taxuḏ šī bāṭil*  
 neg 2msng-receive.p-stem thing free  
 'You have received nothing free' (IQ 20/29/2)

Another reason for the absence of the adnominal linker is that some head nouns consist of an adjective which has become a noun but which retains in a certain way its character as a qualifier. We refer specifically to the case of the adjective *malīḥ* 'beautiful, pleasant', which functions in IQ as a noun, as is shown in the translation by Corriente, but which, perhaps due to its primary nature as an adjective, shows a certain reluctance to add the link suffix *-an*. We have found five cases of this head noun in which the expected adnominal linker is missing. One of them, for example, is the following:

- (31) نعيش ملبّح مثل القمر  
*naʿšaḡ malīḥ miṭla l-qamar*  
 1sng-love.p-stem beauty like def.a-moon  
 'I love someone as fair as the moon' (IQ 175/1/1)

Finally, there are three cases in which the head noun, or the adjunct, or both, are words of Romance origin. The fact that they are seen as external may have inhibited the presence of the adnominal linker in these cases. The following is an example:

- (32) فاج رطند نموت وراه بالصياح  
*fāḡ ruṭundu namūt warā-h bi-ṣ-ṣiyāḥ*  
 face round 1sng-die.p-stem for-3msng with-def.a-moaning  
 'A round face for which I'll die moaning' (IQ 21/6/1)

Other reasons could be put forward for the absence of the suffix *-an* as a link between the head noun and the adjunct, such as certain cases of hyperbaton in which an indefinite noun is highlighted in the initial position, as in 2/0/1

(الصبي نعشق من السوق *šabiyy naʿšaq min as-sūq* ‘A boy I love from the souq’), which could be analysed as the fronted direct object of the verb and not as the head noun of a nominal phrase. Or it could even be argued that IQ’s not using it, as in some cases he does not, may be due to the need to respect the metre of the poems, which always tolerates a certain amount of licence in departing from the normal forms of language. However, counting just the reasons for the absence of the adnominal linker which we have adduced up to now, the number of cases of absence is reduced to thirty, which represents 6.46% of the total number of indefinite noun phrases. This supports what was argued in Ferrando (2000: 31), where an analysis was carried out on a sample (the first forty) of the *zağals* of Ibn Quzmān: the adnominal linker is not an optional trait; on the contrary, it is a permanent and fixed element (with some sporadic absences), which marks the relation between an indefinite noun and the attribute which accompanies and modifies it.

As has been stated by some researchers (Corriente 1977: 121–2; 2013a: 100; Ferrando 2000: 33), the adnominal linker functioned in Andalusī Arabic as a ligature between noun and attribute practically obligatorily in the early period, up to the twelfth century. From that time a decline is seen in the frequency of the adnominal linker, to the point where it practically disappears in the last phase of Andalusī Arabic. In a source such as Pedro de Alcalá, written in Latin script at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the only remains of the adnominal linker to be seen are in a fossilized form with the attribute *axar* (feminine *oxra*), which appears consistently in the forms of *anaxar* and *anoxra* where the noun it accompanies is indefinite. For example: *marad anaxar* ‘another illness’ or *ašyit anoxra* ‘other things’.<sup>32</sup> This prefixing of the suffix *-an* to the second element of the nominal phrase may without doubt be taken as another argument for its function being ligature and not one of indefiniteness.

Another interesting enterprise would be to trace the history of the gradual loss of the adnominal linker and its evolution through Andalusian sources. In this regard the statistical research of Corriente (1988a: 30) may be consulted on a sample of the poems of the Andalusī author Al-Shushtarī (thirteenth century), which indicates that nominal phrases with feminine head nouns would have been the first to lose the adnominal linker. With masculine head nouns the morpheme offered more resistance, as shown in the frequency table of the adnominal linker in various sources of Andalusī Arabic of Ferrando (2000: 29), in which a progressive reduction of frequency is to be seen from the oldest sources to the more recent ones. But for now we confine ourselves merely to pointing out this line of diachronic research, given that a more detailed look at the question would require space and time not available here.

<sup>32</sup> See Corriente 1988b on the materials of Pedro de Alcalá. This representation of the adnominal linker as a morpheme *an-* prefixed to the attribute is what leads us to propose that Andalusī made this morpheme with a vowel /a/, unlike other Arabic dialects in which a greater variety in the colouring of the vowel is to be seen, according to Owens 1988a: 215.

## 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

One of the main objectives of this chapter has been to offer a detailed study, with numerous examples and comments, providing specific information on the use of the adnominal linker in Andalusī Arabic, particularly in the *diwān* of Ibn Quzmān. We think this will serve as a basis for future comparative studies, so that those who look at this type of syntactic phenomenon in the Arabic dialects do not have to confine themselves to generic impressions.<sup>33</sup> It also makes it possible to demonstrate that the adnominal linker has not always been everywhere a sporadic or stylistic trait, but was a specific feature widespread in Andalusī Arabic sources, at least until the thirteenth century.<sup>34</sup> It is a trait used fully consciously by the author who, as he tells us in the introduction, seeks to avoid all classicisms and thinks that the introduction, for example, of the system of cases in popular poetry is something reprehensible. It must be concluded that if the adnominal linker had been considered by the author as the remains of the *tanwīn* of CLA, as an heir of its functions of indefiniteness, he would probably not have used it so consistently throughout his work.

This work supports the idea expressed by Owens that the adnominal linker is not an indefiniteness morpheme or the remains of the *tanwīn* of CLA, for several reasons. First, it is an invariable morpheme which has nothing to do with the system of cases. Secondly, it is used with categories of head noun which did not use *tanwīn* in CLA. Thirdly, indefiniteness in nouns is marked in practically all varieties of neo-Arabic by the absence of a morpheme to mark it. As Holes rightly says (2011a: 81): ‘It is fair to say that if one did not already know that the CLA system (of *tanwīn*) existed, one would be unlikely to reconstruct it on the strength of the modern dialectal evidence, given the substantial differences in form and function between them (i.e. between ‘dialectal’ *tanwīn* and CLA *tanwīn*)’. In this regard, we fully support the thesis of Owens (2006: 105–6), who says the following: ‘It is reasonable to reconstruct the nominal linker \*-Vn into a form of Arabic immediately predating the variety described by Sibawaih, i.e. pre-diaspora Arabic [i.e. of the late seventh/early eighth century] in the terminology adopted here. This follows from the wide geographic distribution of a relatively uniform morphosyntactic phenomenon’.

<sup>33</sup> As Owens notes (2006: 103) ‘I restrict my observations here to Nigerian Arabic, as detailed information on this point from other areas is lacking’.

<sup>34</sup> As stated before, despite the weight of the written evidence, it is finally impossible to know to what extent spoken Andalusī Arabic made use of the adnominal linker, because we lack contemporary records of, or reports on, how the language was actually spoken.

# The Arabic dialects of the Gulf

## *Aspects of their historical and sociolinguistic development*

CLIVE HOLES

The littoral of eastern Arabia, from the mouth of the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab waterway in southern Iraq to the narrow Straits of Hormuz, which separate southern Iran from the northern tip of Oman—a distance of about a thousand kilometres—has throughout its history been an ethnic and cultural melting pot, a fact reflected in its present-day Arabic dialects. Among the factors that created these dialects, three stand out, the first two of which will be the focus of this chapter:

- (1) Elements anciently ‘imported’ from outside:
  - (a) from the north, in the form of a substrate, and/or borrowings, from Semitic languages once spoken in Mesopotamia;
  - (b) from southern Arabia, probably in the pre- or early-Islamic periods. These would appear to be the oldest elements.
- (2) A pervasive bifurcation in the Arabic dialect type, probably at least fifteen centuries old, which was originally associated with lifestyle differences and different geographical origins: the dialects of central Arabian bedouin nomads on the one hand and coastal town- and village-based sedentaries on the other.
- (3) A large stock of lexical borrowings from cultures outside Arabia—India, Persia, Portugal, Turkey, and, most recently, the UK and the USA—which have been absorbed and assimilated over the course of roughly the last five centuries as a result of trade, conquest, colonization, or, in some cases, all three. This has been described in some detail elsewhere (Holes 2001: xxi, xxix–xxxvii) and will not be revisited here.

### 5.1 ANCIENT INHERITED ELEMENTS

Section 5.1 of this chapter is an extended and more detailed treatment of material previously discussed in Holes 2016: 12–23, and before that in Holes 2006a: 30–3.

## 5.1.1 MESOPOTAMIA

For centuries in antiquity, the Gulf was on a major trade route linking the Indus Valley civilization to Mesopotamia (Postgate 1992: 216–18). The northern half of the Arab side of the Gulf, roughly from present-day Kuwait to al-Ḥasā, and including the Bahrain islands, was known in ancient times as Dilmun or Tilmun, and it is supposed that Akkadian speakers from southern Iraq were its earliest known inhabitants. Dilmun was fabled for its abundant fresh water and lush vegetation, and is mentioned in the Akkadian epic poem which tells the story of the Sumerian hero Gilgamesh, King of Uruk. Mercantile and political links with Mesopotamia waxed and waned in antiquity but were generally close, and by the beginning of the seventh century BC, Dilmun had come under direct Babylonian control. In Greek and Latin historical works, there are detailed descriptions of its flora and fauna (Potts 1990: 125–53). The modern Bahraini toponym ʿArād is recorded by Strabo (first century AD) and Ptolemy (second century AD) in the Greek form Arados, which then referred to the whole of the island known today as Muḥarraḡ, part of the Bahrain archipelago, and not just to the present-day eponymous Muḥarraḡ Island village of ʿArād. Four centuries later (the fourth to the fifth centuries AD), following the collapse of Babylon, Bahrain came under Sasanian Persian control. For perhaps three centuries before the coming of Islam (mid-seventh century AD), Christianity was widely practised in the towns on both sides of the Gulf coast. During this period, what is today the name of another village on Muḥarraḡ Island, Samāhij (anciently Masmāhij) seems to have been, like Arados in an earlier period, the name for the whole island. It was the seat of a Nestorian bishop answerable to the Catholicos on the Persian side of the Gulf. We know from the written record that the two corresponded in Syriac, which was the liturgical language of the Nestorian Church. At that point the northern Gulf region was known by its Syriac name Beṭ Qaṭrāye (‘the Diocese (lit. “house”) of Qaṭar’) and the southern part as Beṭ Mazūnāye (‘The Diocese of Oman’). Beaucamp and Robin (1983: 181) note that, in Syriac correspondence conducted from AD 581 to 585 between the patriarch of the Nestorian church at that time, Ishoʿyahb I, and the Bishop of Dayrīn, another settlement on the Arabian coast directly opposite the Bahrain Islands, there is reference to the difficulty pearl-divers were having in observing Sunday as the day of rest. As the authors point out: ‘ce passage montre surtout que le christianisme s’était répandu chez les habitants autochtones de l’île dans les catégories les plus modestes’. Although we have no data attesting to the languages which were spoken in eastern Arabia at this period, circumstantial evidence such as this suggests that some, at least, of the inhabitants of eastern Arabia of that time would have been familiar with some form of Aramaic,<sup>1</sup> alongside others who spoke Arabic or Persian or were multilingual.

<sup>1</sup> The only epigraphic evidence of Aramaic use in the Gulf so far discovered is a short text on a temple stone found on Failaka Island (known to the Greeks as Ikaros) off the coast of Kuwait which dates to the Hellenistic period (third century BC). See Naveh 1995.

### 5.1.1.1 Lexical items

Whatever the truth of that, there are without question vestiges of Akkadian and Aramaic linguistic influence in the Gulf Arabic dialects of today, which, like the Aramaic place names,<sup>2</sup> link the Gulf coast culturally, linguistically, and ethnically<sup>3</sup> with Mesopotamia.<sup>4</sup> Some examples are given in Tables 5.1 a–c, mostly lexical items relating to material culture, of which the largest proportion denote agricultural practices, produce, and tools. It can be seen from this that some of the terminology of allotment farming as practised in the 1970s by Gulf farming communities goes back to Semitic languages which ceased being used in the Gulf area probably 2,000 years ago. In Bahrain, the users of this terminology were mainly members of the Baḥārna community, i.e. the indigenous village Shī‘ī population, who worked as tenant farmers on small-holdings.<sup>5</sup> In the north of Oman, many of the same terms were used by Ibādī villagers living in the mountains and the fertile *wādīs* (river valleys) between them, and in the *sēḥ*, a narrow coastal strip between the mountains and sea into which the mountain *wādīs* debouch, where they pursued a similar lifestyle of cash-crop farming. Apart from my own recordings and field notes, the main evidence for the use of these items is culled from Johnstone 1967 (the whole Gulf), Brockett 1985 (Bāṭina Coast of Oman), Ḥanafī 1964 (Kuwait), and Ḥanḍal 1998 (UAE). The work of the Iraqi Assyriologist Tāhā Bāqir (Bāqir 2010), who suggests Akkadian cognates for around two hundred Iraqi Arabic terms, was also consulted.<sup>6</sup> Cognates for all of the Arabic

<sup>2</sup> Māḥūz, a suburb of Manāma, the capital of Bahrain (but once a separate village), is one such, which is < Aram. *maḥōza* or < Akk. *māḥāzu* ‘shrine, cultic centre, (market) town’. The Bahraini village of Dēr < Syr. *dēr* ‘cloister, monastery’, and still known as late as the end of the nineteenth century as *dēr ar-rāhib* ‘the monk’s cloister’, attests to the pre-Islamic Christian presence in the Gulf, as does the nearby village of Galālī (< *qalālī*, pl of *qillīlī* ‘monk’s cell, hermitage’ cf. Syr. *qellitha* < Gk. *kellion*, with the same meaning). Another Bahraini village name, Būri, may reflect the Babylonian Akk. *būru* ‘cistern, well; pool, pit’. There are also many toponyms which suggest an old Persian presence, such as the villages of id-Dēh (= Pers. ‘village’), Dirāz (‘straight’), Jirdāb (‘whirlpool’), Karrāna (‘margin, side, boundary’), and two village names ending in the Persian affixes *-abād* ‘abode of’: Salmabād, Karbabād, among others.

<sup>3</sup> An intriguing reference to this occurs in the thirteenth-century Arabic dictionary Lisān al-‘Arab (‘The Tongue of the Arabs’) under the lemma *n-b-ḥ*, in which a saying is attributed to a certain Ayyūb b. Qiriyya: ‘the people of Oman are Arabs (‘Arab) who have become Nabatean-ized (*istanbaḥū*) and the people of Bahrain are Nabateans (*Nabīṭ*) who have been Arab-ized (*ista‘rabū*)’. ‘Nabīṭ/ Anbāṭ’ were (often slighting) bedouin appellations for the generality of non-Arab Aramaic-speaking agriculturalists, wherever in Arabia or Iraq they lived.

<sup>4</sup> The difficulties involved in determining with certainty the history of cognate words shared by Akkadian, Aramaic, and Arabic are summarized in Krebernik (2008). Arab names are attested in Akkadian cuneiform inscriptions as early as 853 BC (see chapter 1) but we have very little direct information on the structure and almost none on the vocabulary of Arabic until well into the Common Era.

<sup>5</sup> In Bahrain the Baḥārna form the bulk of the village population, and formerly worked as farmers, potters, blacksmiths, bakers, butchers, weavers, boatbuilders, fishermen, shopkeepers, and small-time traders. Thus the term denotes a social class rather than a tribe, and there are groups of Baḥārna living in every Gulf State from Kuwait to Oman, some having originally migrated as boatbuilders. Even the bedouin tribe the Āl Wahiba, which lives on the fringes of the sand desert of south-eastern Oman, has a subsection called al-Baḥārna (Webster 1991: 473).

<sup>6</sup> However, many of the words listed in Table 1 are unattested in Bāqir or other Iraqi Arabic reference works available to me. This may simply be because we lack a comprehensive dialect survey of Iraq, particularly its southern region.

words listed are attested in one variety or another of Akkadian and/or in Aramaic, its partially contemporaneous successor language in the same geographical space.

(In these tables: Bah = Bahrain; Bas = Basra; I = Iraq; K = Kuwait; O = Oman; SI = Southern Iraq; SY = South Yemen; U = United Arab Emirates; WG = whole of the Gulf)

TABLE 5.1a Mesopotamian lexical influences on Gulf Arabic: agriculture-related

Akk. <sup>7</sup> /Aram.	meaning	Arabic	meaning	Attested in
Akk. <i>ikkaru</i> <sup>8</sup>	‘farmer, ploughman’	‘ <i>akkār</i>	‘farmer; palm-tree cultivator’	Bah, I
Akk. <i>ḥaṣṣinnu</i> Aram. <i>ḥaṣṣīna</i>	‘axe, hatchet; field tool for clearing shrubs, bushes’ (Salonen 1968: 150)	(a) <i>ṣaxxīn</i> (b) <i>xaṣṣīn</i>	(a) ‘hoe/spade for digging and clearing weeds’ (b) ‘axe, hatchet’	(a) Bas, Bah, Kuwait, U (b) U, O
Akk. <i>gidimmu</i>	‘shovel for digging out irrigation channels’ (Salonen 1968: 132)	<i>gaddūm</i>	‘pick-axe; type of shovel’	K, I, Bah
Akk. <i>nīru</i>	‘yoke (for ploughing animals)’; ‘cross-beam’	<i>nīr/ nīra</i>	same meanings (in Bahrain ‘cross- beam on a loom’)	Bah, I
Akk. <i>sekēru</i> Aram. <i>sikārā</i>	‘to block off, dam up (a water channel)’	(a) <i>sakkar</i> <sup>9</sup> (b) <i>skār</i>	(a) ‘to block off a water channel’ (b) ‘material for blocking channels’	Bah, SY
Akk. <i>palgu</i>	‘ditch, canal (usually for irrigation)’	<i>falaḡ/ falay/</i> <i>falag</i>	‘irrigation channel’	Bah, U, O
Akk. <i>zabbīlu</i> Aram. <i>zabbīlā</i>	‘basket’	<i>zabil/ zanbīl/</i> <i>zambīl</i>	‘large oval-shaped palm-leaf basket with handles’	I, WG
Akk. <i>quppu,</i> <i>qappatu</i>	‘box, basket made of reeds’	<i>guffa/ kuffa</i>	‘palm-leaf basket or pot’	Bah, SI
Akk. /Aram. <i>qapīru</i>	‘container for fish/ dates’	<i>gafīr/ ḡifīr</i>	‘palm-leaf basket’	Bah, K, U

(continued)

<sup>7</sup> The main reference works consulted were the CAD; Black, George, and Postgate (2000); and various lexicographical works by Armas Salonen.

<sup>8</sup> The Akk. form *ikkaru* is itself seemingly borrowed from Sumerian *engār* with the same meaning. This word also found its way into CLA as *ʔakkār* ‘tiller, cultivator of land’. The initial pharyngeal in the Gulf Arabic cognate is an ancient innovation, an example of a process called by the medieval Arab grammarians ‘*anʿana*’, whereby an initial glottal was pharyngealized, cf *ʔaḡal* for *ʔaḡal*, *ʔan* for *ʔan*. See Holes 2016: 55–6 for more examples, some of them in recent borrowings from European languages, which shows that the phonological process is still alive.

<sup>9</sup> Landberg (1920–42: 1956) says on the use of this term in southern Yemen that it is ‘without doubt an Aramaic borrowing’, though the route it might have taken is unclear.



TABLE 5.1a Continued

Akk. <i>burû</i> Aram. <i>bûriyā</i>	‘reed mat’	<i>bāri</i> pl <i>bawāri</i>	‘reeds (used as a building material)’	Bah, SI
Akk. <i>šušu</i> Aram. <i>šīšā</i>	‘poor quality dates’	<i>šīš</i>	same meaning	Bah, SI
Akk. <i>angāšu</i>	‘plum’	‘ <i>angēš</i> / ‘ <i>angāš</i>	‘edible pulp of lotus fruit’	Bah, I <sup>10</sup>
Akk. <i>ḥassū</i> Aram. <i>ḥassā</i>	‘lettuce’	<i>xass/ xast</i>	same meaning	Bah, I
Akk. <i>sumundû/</i> <i>šumuttu</i> (Sum. <i>sumun-dar</i> )	‘beetroot’	<i>šuwandar</i>	same meaning	Bah, I
Akk. <i>liptu</i>	‘turnip’	<i>lift</i>	same meaning	Bah, I
Akk. <i>silqu</i> Aram. <i>silqā</i>	‘mangold’	<i>silg</i>	‘chard’	Bah, I
Akk. <i>ḥurpû</i>	‘early crop’	<i>harfi</i>	‘fresh, young (meat); early (crop)’	Bah, I
Akk. <i>gidlu/ gidil</i>	‘plait (of onions), plaited string’	<i>gidla/ gidla</i>	‘plait, fringe, forelock’	Bah, SI
Akk. <i>ḥepû</i>	‘to break up clods of earth’	<i>xaff</i>	same meaning	Bah

TABLE 5.1b Mesopotamian lexical influences on Gulf Arabic: seafaring- and fishing-related

Akk. <i>sikkānu</i>	‘rudder, steering paddle’	<i>sukkān</i>	same meaning	WG
Akk. <i>ḥinnu</i>	‘ship’s cabin’	<i>xinn</i>	‘ship’s hold’	Bah, K, U
Akk. <i>ṭebû</i> <sup>11</sup> Aram. <i>ṭabaʿ</i> , ship’)	‘to sink (of a ship)’	<i>ṭabaʿ</i>	‘to sink, run aground (of a ship)’	WG
Akk. <i>gigurru</i>	‘reed basket’	<i>gargūr</i> <sup>12</sup>	‘bee-hive fish-trap’ (= a basket made of woven palm sticks, and turned upside down <sup>13</sup> )	Bah, U
Akk. <i>bāru</i>	‘to catch (fish, birds)’	<i>bāra</i>	‘to collect fish from a fish-trap; hunt, search (the seabed for pearls)’	Bah, K, U

<sup>10</sup> In the Christian Baghdadi dialect the meaning of ‘*angāš*’ is ‘plum’, as in the Akkadian cognate.<sup>11</sup> The pharyngeal consonants disappeared in all positions in Akkadian.<sup>12</sup> *gargūr* < *gigurru* via dissimilation.<sup>13</sup> This was the original method of construction; by the 1970s, wire mesh was used instead of palm-stick lattice work.

TABLE 5.1C Mesopotamian lexical influences on Gulf Arabic: general items

Akk. <i>šulum</i> <i>šamši</i>	‘sunset’	<i>slūm iš-</i> <i>šams</i>	same meaning	I, Bah, U, O
Akk. <i>kalakku</i> <sup>14</sup>	‘metal box’	<i>kalak</i>	‘metal bucket; box-shaped metal brazier’	Bah, U
Akk. <i>agannu</i> / <i>aggannu</i> Aram. <i>aggānā</i>	‘(stone, clay, or metal) bowl for food or liquids’	<i>lagan</i> , <i>laggān</i> <sup>15</sup>	‘bowl, basin’	I, Bah, U
Akk. <i>manū</i>	‘unit of dry weight’	<i>mann</i> pl <i>amnān</i>	‘unit of dry weight’ (cf. Eng. <i>maund</i> )	I, WG
Akk. <i>šurānu</i> Aram. <i>sinnawr</i>	‘(domestic) cat’	<i>sannūr</i>	same meaning	I, (parts of) Bah <sup>16</sup>
Akk. <i>nadānu</i> Aram. <i>natan</i>	‘to give’	<i>naṭa</i>	same meaning	I, (parts of) Bah <sup>17</sup>
Akk. <i>dalāḥu</i>	‘to muddy, stir up’	<i>dallax</i>	‘to discolour, render turbid, muddy’	Bah, U
Akk. <i>abāru</i>	‘to bind tightly (limbs)’	<i>habbar</i>	‘to bind (broken limbs)’	O
Akk. <i>rabāšum</i>	‘protest’	<i>rabša</i>	‘commotion, tumult’	Bah, O

The examples selected are in the form in which I recorded them in Bahrain and Oman in the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. The selection criteria are: (a) words whose form and meaning closely match those of Akkadian/Aramaic cognates and which, to my knowledge, are (b) neither used in Arabic dialects spoken outside the Mesopotamian/Gulf area, nor attested in Classical Arabic (CLA) as words of pure Arabic origin. It is not possible, however, to be certain that all these words are part of an old Gulf substrate, as in some cases their geographical distribution holds out the possibility that they could have entered the area later as borrowings via contact with speakers of neighbouring Arabic dialects (especially Iraqi) or languages (Persian) which had themselves absorbed them as borrowings earlier on. The term *zabīl* ‘a type of palm-leaf basket’ illustrates the problem: it occurs in the same or a similar form in all the Iraqi, Gulf, and south Arabian dialects (and in other Arabic dialects much further afield<sup>18</sup>) and also in Persian, and is an ancient word of Mesopotamian origin—neo-Babylonian Akkadian *zabbīlu* or Aramaic *zābīlā* being the probable donor form—but exactly what

<sup>14</sup> This word also means ‘raft’ in Akkadian, its normal sense in Iraqi Arabic.

<sup>15</sup> The *l* would appear to have migrated to these forms from the Arabic definite article: *laggān* < *il-aggān*. There are a number of other Bahraini nominal forms where this seems also to have happened and can still be observed, e.g. *ahāna* and *lahāna* are both used and both mean ‘a cabbage’.

<sup>16</sup> In Bahrain this is a Bahārna-only word; the Sunni ‘Arab of Bahrain use *gaṭu* (ultimately < L. *cattus*).

<sup>17</sup> Used only in a small number of Bahārna villages; all the ‘Arab and most Bahārna have ‘*aṭa*.

<sup>18</sup> It occurs even in Cypriot Arabic, in the form *znepil* (< *zanābīl*) ‘baskets’, and is part of the oldest stratum of the Cypriot dialect, an offshoot of the so-called *qeltu* dialects of the Syro-Anatolian-Mesopotamian type (Borg 2006: 537).

route(s) it took into Arabic, and when, is impossible to ascertain.<sup>19</sup> Arabic lexicographers, ancient and modern, have generally been uninterested in etymology, and content to simply label words they thought were of non-Arabic origin as *daxil* ('intruder', 'foreign').

We do know, however, that one at least of the examples in Tables 5.1a–c was noted by the early Arab lexicographers as a 'dialectal peculiarity (*luġā*) of 'Abd al-Qays', 'Abd al-Qays being the ancient eastern Arabian tribe from which today's Baḥārna claim descent, and present in eastern Arabia from no later than the seventh century AD. This is the word *ṣaxxīn*, which in modern Gulf farming communities designates 'a spade or hoe whose shaft is at right angles to the blade', and is used for digging and clearing weeds, earth, and other debris from irrigation channels. It is defined in similar terms (*miṣḥā munʿaṭifa* 'a bent spade') in the tenth-century AD dictionary al-Ṣaḥāḥ, and repeated in the thirteenth-century Lisān al-ʿArab. The Arabic term appears to be a metathesized form of the Aramaic word *ḥaṣṣīna* with a similar range of meaning: 'axe, hatchet; field digging tool', though spelt in the Classical dictionaries with plain, non-emphatized *s*. It is the practice of Arabic dictionaries to organize words by root consonants, and so *saxxīn* is listed in the medieval lexica at the end of the entries for the root *s-x-n*, whose basic meaning is 'to heat', even though it obviously has no connection in meaning or etymology with this root. This word also occurs, in unmetathesized form, as Arabic *xaṣīn* 'axe, hatchet' in the modern dialects of the southern Gulf. It is also found in this form in the medieval lexica as the sole lemma under its supposed Arabic 'root' *x-ṣ-n*, with a sixth-century AD poetic attestation. In both its current spoken forms, this lexical item is clearly not originally an Arabic word but an old borrowing, though not noted as such by the lexicographers.

Two other items worth special remark are *slūm* (*iṣ-šams*) 'sunset' and the verb *ṭabaʿ* 'to sink, run aground (of a ship)'. The first of these, and the expression *silmat iṣ-šams* 'the sun (has) set', were used at the time of my fieldwork to mark the end of the working day. This usage seems to be confined to the dialects of the Gulf coast—the normal way of expressing 'sunset' in virtually every other variety of Arabic is to use another verbal noun entirely, *ġurūb aṣ-šams*. Bahraini examples I recorded are:

- (1) *gazzarat-ni ila l-əslūm*  
lasted-me to the-sun set  
'It (= a job at the speaker's farm) took me until sundown (to complete)'
- (2) *lən silmat iṣ-šams u ṣallēna ʿala n-nabi...*  
when set the-sun and prayed-1pl to the-prophet  
'Once the sun had set, and we had prayed for the Prophet...'

The same verb and verbal noun, again predicated of the sun, are attested for Oman (Landberg 1942: 1969; Galloway 1977: 67; Brockett 1985: 125) and the UAE (Ḥaṇḍal 1998: 331), as well as, for Oman, an active participle *silmān* in *iṣ-šams silmāna* 'the sun has set' (Reinhardt 1894: 57).

<sup>19</sup> Kaufmann (1974: 111) considers on the basis of its form that the word must have been a loan from Akkadian into Aramaic, but it is unclear at what point it entered the Arabic dialects of southern Mesopotamia and the Gulf.

The Gulf dialectal verb *silim* (= CLA *salima*) has cognates in all the other Semitic languages, and a common range of meanings connected with being ‘safe, complete, at peace’. However, the verbal noun *sulūm* (dialectal *slūm*) is not, to my knowledge, attested for this verb in any other variety of Arabic, including CLA, nor for the finite verb in this sense. In Akkadian, however, the cognate verb *šalāmu* has a verbal noun *šulum*, and, even more to the point, it often collocates with *šamaš* (= Ar. *šams*) ‘sun’ in the expression *šulum šamši* ‘sunset’, exactly like its cognates in the Gulf Arabic phrase *slūm iš-šams*. The point is that *slūm* as a verbal noun in Gulf Arabic is used only, to the best of my knowledge, in this phrase—the other senses of the verb *silim*, ‘to be safe’ and ‘to be at peace’ have different verbal nouns, *salāma* and *salām* respectively. There seems to be no cognate expression of *sulūm iš-šams* in Aramaic, so one explanation is that the Akkadian expression passed directly into the spoken Arabic of the Gulf coast at some point in the remote past, and shows the expected Akkadian–Arabic consonantal correspondence between Arabic *s* and Akkadian *š*. Alternatively, it could be an ancient common Semitic usage which was present in some ancient Arabic dialects, but was simply not recorded by the Arab lexicographers. This is a distinct possibility, as the early Arab philologists and lexicographers were in the habit of questioning the purity (*faṣāḥa*) of the eastern Arabian dialects (such as those of the ‘Abd al-Qays and Azd ‘Umān), describing them as *ḡayr mawṭūq bihā* ‘untrustworthy’ because of the prolonged contact of their speakers with Persians and Indians (Kofler 1940: 65).

The second noteworthy item is *ṭubaʿ* ‘to sink and be wrecked, run aground (of a ship)’, as in this example:

- (3) *il-bagāya kill-əh ṭubaʿ*  
 the-rest all-it sank  
 ‘The rest (of the pearling fleet), all of it, sank’

This verb has a unitary verbal noun *ṭabʿa*, which at the time of my fieldwork was commonly used in a phrase for a disastrous event in Bahraini social history, *sanat aṭ-ṭabʿa* ‘the year of the sinking’. This refers to the year 1925, when the whole of the Bahraini pearling fleet was lost in a freak storm at sea. The verb also has a participial form analogous to *silmān*, *ṭabʿān* (pl *ṭubāʿa*) meaning ‘sunk, capsized, wrecked’, e.g.

- (4) *il-xašab mḡaṭṭaṭīn, ṭubāʿa*  
 the-boats scattered capsized  
 ‘The boats were scattered everywhere, capsized’

Again, the distributional profile of this item in the other Semitic languages is probably significant: cognate forms with exactly the same meaning occur in Akkadian, Aramaic, and Hebrew, but none in any other variety of spoken Arabic, or in CLA.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> However, there is a CLA pattern V verb *taṭabbaʿa*, listed in the lexica under the root *ṭ-b-ʿ*, with the meaning ‘to burst its banks (of a river)’ or ‘to be waterlogged (of land)’ which looks to have some semantic connection with the Gulf meaning of *ṭubaʿ*. Indeed, on visits to Bahraini farms I recorded the participial form *ṭubʿān* being applied to land which had become waterlogged as a result of accidental over-watering. But the basic senses of the root *ṭ-b-ʿ* in CLA, indicated as such by the lexicographers, are ‘to be imprinted’

### 5.1.1.2 Function words

#### (a) existential particles

Possible traces of Mesopotamian influence also exist in dialectal grammatical constructions and function words. The most salient examples are the existential particles *aku* ‘there is’, and its negatives *māku* and (in coordinated negatives ‘neither...nor’) *lāku* ‘there is not’. These particles are usually thought of by Arabic dialectologists as stereotypically Iraqi, occurring throughout Mesopotamia (Blanc 1964: 146–7), as well as in neighbouring Kuwait (Hanafi 1964: 22). However, I recorded them also in some Bahraini locations,<sup>21</sup> e.g.

- (5) *māku dāʿi tikalf-ūn rūḥ-kum*  
 not exist need you-trouble-pl self-you.pl  
 ‘There’s no need for you to put yourselves to any trouble’ (Ḥajar village, northern Bahrain)
- (6) *aku hast mustašfa, lākin mā yaʿtaqid bi l-mustašfa*  
 exist exist<sup>22</sup> hospital but not he-believe in the-hospital  
 ‘There was indeed a hospital, but he didn’t believe in hospitals’ (al-Mukhārga Manāma)
- (7) *l-awwal mā miš amrāḍ ha-l-kiṭir... wi lāku maraḍ il-kila,*  
 before not exist illnesses this-much and not exist kidney disease  
*wi lāku iltihāb*  
 and not exist arthritis  
 ‘In the old days, there weren’t that many illnesses... and no kidney disease and no arthritis (lit. “inflammation” (of the joints))’ (al-Fāḍil, Manāma)

An Arabic-internal explanation of the origin of *aku/ māku*—as a corruption of (*mā*) *yakūn* ‘is not’—has sometimes been proposed (Hanafi 1964: 22; Jastrow 2013: 110–12), but this looks ad hoc, as it rests on a partial phonological similarity with unmotivated apocopations fore and aft, and a stress shift. Perhaps more plausible, linguistically and geographically, is that the origin is one of the same Semitic languages which bequeathed the lexical items exemplified earlier. There are two possibilities:

- (1) In several varieties of Akkadian, *makû(m)* is a verb and noun meaning ‘want, lack, need; to be absent, missing’ (Black, George, and Postgate 2000: 192). There is no corresponding positive form *\*aku* in Akkadian, only *bašû* ‘to exist’. But if *māku* ‘there is not’ came into Iraqi and Gulf Arabic from Akkadian as a

and ‘to be rusty, dirty’; *taṭabbaʿa* in the sense of ‘burst its banks (river)/ be waterlogged (land)’ seems to be an unconnected meaning added (like *saxxīn* under the root *s-x-n*) as if it were a footnote. A possible explanation is that this verb and sense were specific to the dialects of only one of the areas (perhaps Iraq?) from which the early lexicographers drew their materials. If so, it may have even at that time been an Arabicized substrate item, as it seems to be in the Gulf case. But in the absence of any information on its source, it is impossible to know for certain.

<sup>21</sup> In three Baḥārna villages and in four neighbourhoods of the Bahraini capital, Manāma.

<sup>22</sup> *aku* and *hast* are existential particles with the same meaning ‘there is’. The use of them together lends a note of emphasis ‘There was indeed...’

substrate or borrowed form, it is possible that *aku* 'there is' arose later via an internal reanalysis of *māku* as the Arabic negative particle *mā* 'not' + *aku*, which thence came to mean 'there is'.<sup>23</sup> An analogous process produced another pair of Gulf existential particles: *miš* 'there is' and *māmiš* 'there isn't'. The negative *māmiš* is common in a large area which includes southern Iraq and Bahrain. But the positive form *miš* 'there is' seems to be uniquely Bahraini, and seems to have arisen by a similar process of reanalysis of *māmiš* as *mā* + *miš*, the 'parent' form *māmiš* being an abbreviated form of the phrase *mā min šay* 'there is no thing', which still survives alongside it as an alternative locution. A few examples will illustrate this positive usage of *miš*.

- (8) *mā adri*    *ʿād miš*,    *b-ašūf*...    *lēn miš*    *u*    *bağēt*    *ağīb*,  
 not I-know    still exist    part-I-see...    if exist    and    you-want    I-bring  
*ağīb*    *lik*  
 I-bring    to-you  
 'I don't know if there is still any left, I'll have a look... if there is, and you want me to bring (some), I'll bring you some'
- (9) *ixwān-i*,    *miš wāḥid*    *fi l-ğāmiʿa*,    *wāḥid*    *yištağil*  
 brothers-my    exist one    in the-university    one    he-work  
 '(As to) my brothers, there's one at university and one who is working'
- (10) - *māmiš ḍaww!*  
       not exist fire  
       - *miš ḍaww!*  
       exist fire  
       - 'There's no fire!'  
       - 'There *is* a fire!'

It is clear from these examples how positive *miš* could have arisen naturally from negative *māmiš*. In the same way, positive *aku* may have arisen from negative *māku*. One of the attractions of this theory of the origin of *aku*/*māku* is that they are used throughout the whole of Mesopotamia, not just in the southern areas which border the Gulf, and map directly on to large areas where the proposed cognate form, Akk. *makû(m)* would once have been in use. If it is correct that a form of Babylonian Akkadian was once in use in ancient Bahrain (that is, the coast of eastern Arabia from Basra to the eponymous archipelago of today), then it is possible that Akkadian *makû(m)* was the origin of *māku* in the spoken Arabic of this area as well as of Iraq.

(2) An alternative theory was proposed in Müller-Kessler (2003): that south-eastern Babylonian Aramaic, in particular Mandaic, was the source of these particles. The pre-Islamic Old Aramaic dialects of south-eastern Iraq were markedly different

<sup>23</sup> If this was an Akkadian borrowing into spoken Arabic, the long /ā/ of the Arabic *māku* could have arisen precisely as a result of the local re-interpretation of Akk. *makû* as consisting of \*akû with a pre-proposed Arabic negative, \*mā, which has a long vowel. The final long vowel of the resulting \*mākû would have been shortened by general rule → *māku*.

from those of the northern regions. One of them, Mandaic,<sup>24</sup> was spoken in southern Iraq and the neighbouring area around Ahvaz in what is now the Arabic-speaking province of southern Iran called Khūzistān. A peculiarity of Mandaic Aramaic is that it had a pair of particles written as *ʔkʔ* (possibly pronounced *ʔaka*) ‘there is’, and *lykʔ* ‘there is not’ (= *lika* or *leka*). Müller-Kessler also notes a variant form for ‘there is not’: *mʔkʔ* (= *mākā*). In neo-Mandaic *ekko* ‘there is’ and *lekko* ‘there is not’, seemingly successors of these much older forms, are still in use today. If *ʔkʔ/lykʔ/mʔkʔ* are the origin of Arabic *aku/lāku/māku*, they presumably first entered Iraqi Arabic as a substrate via the Aramaic once spoken in the south of the country, and thence spread north to take root in the whole of Mesopotamia. It is conceivable that this is what happened as, after the total destruction of Baghdad and mass slaughter of its citizens by the Mongols in 1258, the city was gradually repopulated over several centuries by rural immigrants from the surrounding areas, including southern Iraq—which is where, on this theory, Arabic *aku/lāku/māku* originally came into being. Once these forms had taken root in Baghdad (they are common to all three modern communal dialects of the city, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish<sup>25</sup>), and the city had reestablished itself as Iraq’s political and economic capital, they could have spread far and wide as ‘prestigious’ forms. On this theory, their occurrence in modern Kuwait and Bahrain would also be unsurprising: there is, as already argued, the possibility that a southern variety of Old Aramaic was once spoken in both before Arabic took over, as ancient Bahrain was for centuries a cultural and linguistic extension of southern Mesopotamia.

(b) the conjunction *lō* ‘if’; ‘or’

Another possible morphosyntactic link with predecessor Semitic languages is the particle *lō*, cognate with Akkadian *lū*, and with a range of similar functions. In the Bahārna dialects of Bahraini Arabic *lō* ‘if’ is used as a particle signalling a hypothetical or counterfactual condition (= ‘If it were the case that ...’/ ‘Had it been the case that ...’). This is a function shared with the CLA cognate *law* and all other Arabic dialects, and it is also one of the many functions of *lū* in Akkadian. But in the Bahārna dialects, *lō* is also used as a coordinating conjunction (= ‘or’), just as *lū* is used in Akkadian (i.e. it is a secondary function of *lō/lū* in both). Compare these Bahraini examples:

- (11) *biryāni, lō ʔabxa fānya*  
       biryani or dish other  
       ‘Biryani or some other dish’
- (12) *mifil hāda gadd-ah, lō akbar?*  
       like this size-it or bigger  
       ‘Similar in size to this one, or bigger?’

<sup>24</sup> The name of the language comes from the Mandaeans, followers of a non-Christian gnostic religion (Aram. *manda* ‘knowledge’).

<sup>25</sup> Virtually all the Jews had left Baghdad by 1951, following the Arab–Israeli war of 1948.

- (13) *trūḥ-ūn bēt raḡil-kum, lō tḡillūn?*  
 you-go-pl home (of) husband-you.pl or you-remain-pl  
 'Did you (= newly married women) move to your husbands' homes, or did you remain (in your families' homes)?'

with the Akkadian:

- (14) *šumma piʔittu lū gumāru... ittugut*<sup>26</sup>  
 if glowing coal or ember fall  
 'If a glowing coal or ember ... falls (from the brazier)'

The Bahraini ʿArab dialects, however, which are descended from the 'bedouin' dialects of central Arabia, do not use *lō* as a conjunction in this way, but only as a conditional particle, and in the wider Gulf area its conjunctive use seems to be limited to the Baḡārna dialects.<sup>27</sup> But it is perhaps significant that *lō* 'or' is also found in the Arabic dialects of Mesopotamia: in Muslim Baghdad (Blanc 1964: 156), in southern Iraq (Meissner 1903: xxxv) and in neighbouring Khūzistān (Ingham 1997: 17). As far as I know, this conjunctive usage of *lō* is absent from all other Arabic dialects. Like the existential particles *aku/māku/lāku*, 'conjunctive' *lō* expresses a basic linguistic function, and its geographical restriction to the Arabic dialects of southern Mesopotamia and the northern Gulf again coincides, like *aku/māku/lāku*, with areas of ancient Babylonian influence. Thus the geographical distribution of its use in modern spoken Arabic is also suggestive of an ancient local influence rather than an Arabic-internal development. However, it cannot be excluded that *lō* developed its conjunctive function in the dialects of spoken Arabic which have it separately from the Akkadian development of *lū*, and that this is a case of parallel development rather than of a substrate feature or the result of contact.

### 5.1.2 SOUTHERN ARABIA

The source of a second group of ancient elements in the Gulf region is southern Arabia, in particular the south-west. Two basic morphological features will be discussed here:

- (i) 2fsng enclitic possessive/object pronoun suffix of the form *-(i)š*,<sup>28</sup> e.g. *bēt-iš* 'your (fsng) house', *abū-š* 'your (fsng) father'.
- (ii) an infix *-in(n)-*,<sup>29</sup> which, in the dialects that have it, is obligatorily inserted between an active participle (ap) with verbal force and an object enclitic pronoun.<sup>30</sup> Examples from the Baḡārna dialects of Bahrain are m: *kātib-inn-uh* 'I/you/he has written it'; f: *kātibat-inn-uh* 'I/you/she has written it'. Where the ap has a nominal function, the infix is absent, so *mʿallim-in-kum* 'I/you/he has taught you (pl)' contrasts with *mʿallim-kum* 'your (pl) teacher'.

<sup>26</sup> Example taken from the CAD, *lū*, meaning three.

<sup>27</sup> First noted as a peculiarity of 'Bahraini Arabic', but without any further comment, by Johnstone (1967: 159) in his study of the Gulf dialects as they were in the late 1950s.

<sup>28</sup> The IPA alveolar fricative [ʃ].

<sup>29</sup> The *-n-* is doubled before a vowel-initial suffix.

<sup>30</sup> See Owens 2013a for a historical reconstruction of the origin of this infix.



### 5.1.2.1 Geographical incidence

#### (i) *-(i)š*

The *-(i)š* form of the 2fsng pronoun suffix is general throughout southern Arabia: it is the most common reflex in the Arabic dialects of Yemen and Oman (both in the north and in the southern province of Dhofar<sup>31</sup>), among both the sedentary and bedouin-descended populations. Significantly, *-š* (or a close phonetic variant) is also the form of the 2fsng suffix in all the so-called Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs) of the Semitic family spoken along the south coast of Arabia: Ḥarsūsī, Jibbālī, Hobyot, Soqoṭrī, Baṭḥarī, and the largest of them, Mehri, which straddles the Yemeni-Omani border and has c.140,000 speakers.

In eastern Arabia *-(i)š* is universal in the Baḥārna dialects of the Bahrain islands and the eastern Saudi coastal region opposite. But in Najd, Kuwait, the Qatar peninsula, and the Bahraini Sunni ʿArab communities, the 2fsng pronoun suffix is an affricate: either an alveolar *-(i)č* (= IPA [tʃ]) along the Gulf Coast, or a dental *-(i)ć* (= IPA [tʃ]) in Najd, thus *bēt-ič/ bēt-ić, abū-č/ abū-ć*. The UAE is a ‘border’ area, with some communities having the fricative *-(i)š*, and some the affricate *-(i)č* (see Map 5.1).

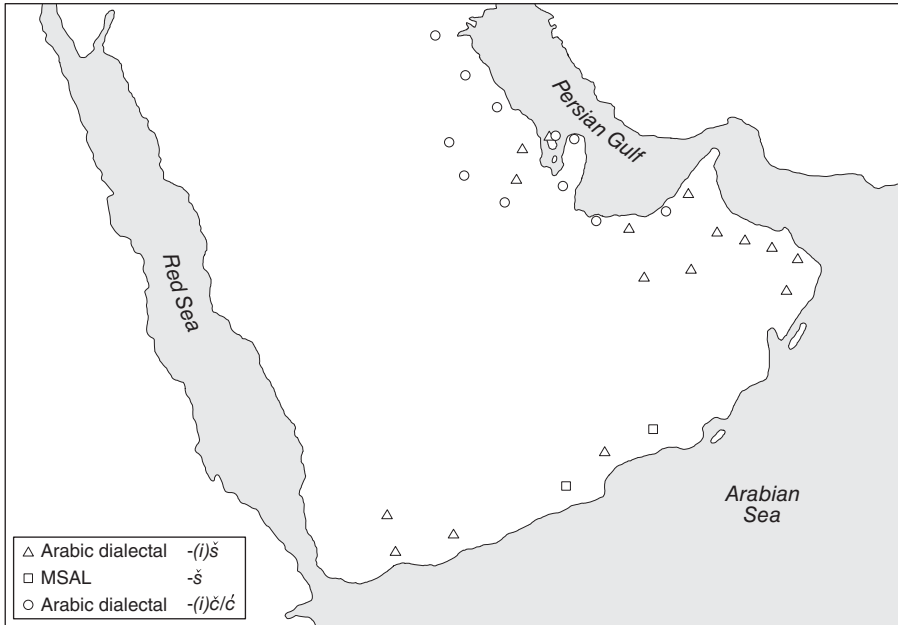
#### (ii) the infix *-n(n)-*

Turning now to the *-in(n)-* infix, we find a similar but not identical pattern of distribution to *-(i)š*. It is found in the following dialects (see Map 5.2):

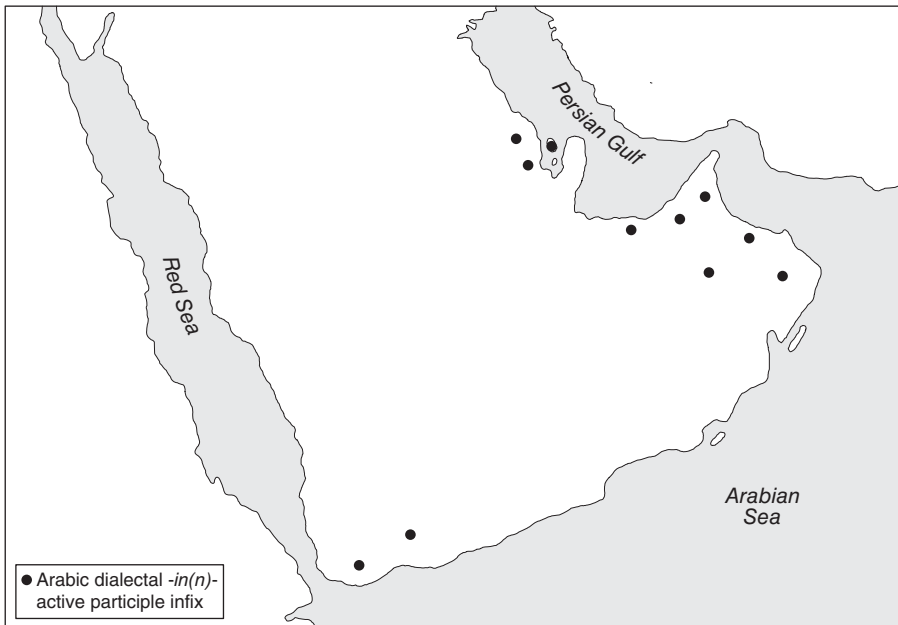
- (1) all those of northern, western, eastern, and south-eastern Oman, whether of the ‘bedouin’ or ‘sedentary’ type;
- (2) those of the UAE: Qafisheh (1977: 168–71), in material gathered in Abu Dhabi, notes it as being in variation with the construction without the infix, though he is unspecific as to which tribes/communities use which construction, or whether they are in some kind of rule-governed variation with one another. He simply (but misleadingly<sup>32</sup>) describes this infix construction as ‘nutation’. Johnstone notes one example of it for Abu Dhabi without comment; Al-Rawi notes one example from Abu Dhabi town, and one from the oasis town of Al-ʿAyn on the Omani border. I have come across many examples of it in UAE oral poetry, and the distribution suggests it is widespread, occurring in the work of poets from Abu Dhabi, Shārja, Dibba, and Khōr Fakkān. Remarkably, a clear *written* example of it occurs in a letter from the ruler of Abu Dhabi to the British Political Resident in the mid-nineteenth century, at a time when it was normal for written correspondence to be in non-standard Arabic (Holes 2008a: 199–200).

<sup>31</sup> For Dhofar, Davey 2013: 99.

<sup>32</sup> Misleadingly because, although this construction involves *n*-insertion, hence the name, it has no connection, diachronic or synchronic, with CLA *tanwīn* (‘nutation’), whose main function is to mark definiteness and case, nor with what has been termed ‘dialectal *tanwīn*’ (Holes 2004b) which involves the addition of an *-in* suffix to indefinite nouns, especially when they are followed by an adjective, e.g. *bint-in zēna* ‘a nice girl’, or other forms of modifying adnominal.



MAP 5.1 The 2fsng object/possessive pronoun enclitic: forms and their incidence in eastern and southern Arabia today



MAP 5.2 The dialectal  $-in(n)-$  active participle infix: incidence in eastern and southern Arabia today

- (3) all the Baḥārna (Shīʿi) dialects of Bahrain, rural and urban, in which it is one of many features that distinguish their speech from that of the Najdi-descended population of the islands (Prochazka 1981: 46–7; Holes 1983a: 25–6), and in the neighbouring eastern province of Saudi Arabia, where there is also a large Baḥārna population whose dialects are very similar to those of the Bahraini Baḥārna. Prochazka (1988a: 75) records it for the dialect of Abū Thōr, around 15 kilometres from Hofūf, and most notably, it is attested for the large and ancient eastern Saudi city of al-Qaṭīf.<sup>33</sup>
- (4) the dialects of South Yemen: in Dathīna, west of the Ḥaḍramawt and in Yarīm in Ibb Governate

Here are some sentence examples from these locations, with the construction in boldface.

Omani examples (Holes 2011a: 78–80):

- (15) *taw nūkil ha-l-maskūt ... mā fāyid-in-ni*  
 now I-eat this-biscuit ... not benefit.ap-in-me  
 ‘Now, I’m eating these biscuits ... but they’re not doing me any good’ (Muḍaibi, ‘sedentary’ dialect, south-eastern Oman)
- (16) *tūga<sup>c</sup>-ha, mā rāym-at-in-ha*  
 it-hurt-her not endure.ap-f-in-it  
 ‘It’s causing her pain, she can’t endure it’ (Nizwa, ‘sedentary’ dialect, central Oman)
- (17) *fāḥṣ-at-in-ni, šāyḥ-at-in-ni, wāzn-at-in-ni*  
 examine.ap-f-in-me look.ap-f-in-me weigh.ap-f-in-me  
 ‘She examined me, looked at me, and weighed me’ (Qalhāt, ‘sedentary’ dialect, eastern Oman)
- (18) *tafni, māf-inn-ah ha-l-wugūt*  
 it-die kill.ap-in-them these-droughts  
 ‘They (= oryx) died out, those droughts killed them off’ (Āl Wahība, ‘bedouin’ dialect, south-eastern Oman)
- (19) *bass il-ḥarīm əmkaffiy-āt-in-hum*  
 Just the-women manage.ap-fpl-in-them  
 ‘The women by themselves can manage them’ (Āl Wahība ‘bedouin’ dialect, south-eastern Oman)

<sup>33</sup> Al-Qaṣṣāb (n.d.) issue 26. The author notes that the population is divided between those who have these infix forms ‘when the participle has verbal force’ and those who do not. Although he does not say so explicitly, it seems likely that the division is, as in neighbouring Bahrain, between the indigenous non-Najdis (Shīʿis) and the Najdi incomer tribal elements. I am grateful to Hussein Mohammed Hussein al-Jamry of Bani Jamra village, Bahrain, for alerting me to this publication.

- (20) *min maʿt-inn-ak? ana maʿt-inn-ak*  
 who give.ap-in-you I give.ap-in-you  
 ‘Who’ll give you (money)? I will’ (Saḥam, Bāṭina coast, ‘bedouin’ dialect, northern Oman)
- (21) *awāmir ʔmtallīʿ-t-in-ha l-ḥukūma*  
 orders issue.ap-f-in-them the-government  
 ‘Decrees which the government has issued’ (Durūʿ ‘bedouin’ dialect, north-western Oman)

Emirati examples (from Johnstone 1967: 169; Al-Rawi 1990: 110, 156; Holes 2008a: 199–200):

- (22) *yāy-in-ha*  
 come to.ap-in-it  
 ‘(I) have been to it’ (Abu Dhabi)
- (23) *ir-rayyāl illi yāy-inn-a ʿind-a bistān*<sup>34</sup>  
 the-man who come to.ap-in-him with-him garden  
 ‘The man who came to him had a garden’ (Abu Dhabi)
- (24) *maktūb yāyb-inn-a ḥagg iš-šyūx*  
 letter bring.ap-in-it for the-sheikhs  
 ‘A letter which (I) have brought for the Sheikhs’ (Al-ʿAyn)
- (25) *wāṣl-at-inn-ak taʿārīf-in minna*  
 reach to.ap-f-in-you instructions-linker from-us  
 ‘Instructions will have reached you from us’ (Abu Dhabi, nineteenth-century written example)

Bahraini examples: Baḥārna villages and urban areas (Holes 2016: 20–3):

- (26) *il-wālda mṭalg-in-ha abū-y* (Rās Rummān neighbourhood,  
 the-mother divorce.ap-in-her father-my Manāma City, Bahrain)  
 ‘My father has divorced my mother’
- (27) *tiḥkil sittat aṣrāb mākl-in-ha l-ḥašīš*  
 you-get six seed-beds eat.ap-in-them the-weeds  
 ‘You’ll find six seed-beds overgrown with weeds’ (Abu Ṣaybiʿ village, northern Bahrain)
- (28) *ʔmbaddid-inn-ah ʿala gadd il-maḥallāt*  
 spread.ap-in-it on extent (of) the-plots  
 ‘(I) have spread it (= rat poison) all over the farm plots’ (Sanad village, eastern Bahrain)

<sup>34</sup> In her gloss and note on this example, and the following one from al-ʿAyn, Al-Rawi misunderstands the construction and consequently mistranslates it.

- (29) *sabab-ha muġta bāyk-at-inn-ah čalba min l-əbdayya*<sup>c</sup>  
 cause-its top steal.ap-f-in-it bitch from Budayya<sup>c</sup>  
 ‘The cause of it was a vessel-top which some bitch from Budayya<sup>c</sup> had stolen’  
 (‘Ālī village, central Bahrain)
- (30) *il-bāki kill-əh mulk min ‘ind iš-šyūx šār-inn-ah*  
 the-rest all-it property from off the-sheikhs buy.ap-in-it  
 ‘The rest is all property which he’s bought from the Sheikhs’ (Jirdāb village,  
 eastern Bahrain)

South Yemeni examples (from Landberg 1909: 721 and Diem 1973: 132):

- (31) *ana gāy-inn-ak bākīr*  
 I come to.ap-in-you tomorrow  
 ‘I’ll come to you tomorrow’ (Daṭīna, south Yemen)
- (32) *šu dī musūwy-inn-ah?*  
 what that do.ap-in-it  
 ‘What is it that has done it?’ (Daṭīna, south Yemen)
- (33) *ana kāfiy-inn-uk fī l-kiswa w fī l-akl w fī š-šarāb*  
 I take care.ap-in-you in the-clothes and in the-food and in the-drink  
 ‘I have given you what you needed in the way of clothes, food, and drink’  
 (Yarīm, south Yemen)

### 5.1.3 ORIGINS

#### 5.1.3.1 2fsng *-(i)š* versus *-(i)ć* and *-(i)č*

It is relatively easy to explain the ‘northern/ north-eastern’ *-(i)ć* and *-(i)č*. Historically, the ‘bedouin’ dialects which have these forms affricated the phoneme *k* in all positions, so that we find forms such as *čibīr* or *čibīr* ‘big’, *bićīr* or *bičīr* ‘first-born’, *ħinć* or *ħinč* ‘jaw’ rather than *kibīr*, *bikr*, *ħink* throughout Najd (the forms with *ć*) and the Gulf (the forms with *č*). The process was, however, conditioned, occurring only where there was a front vowel in the vicinity of the *k*, and especially if the vowel was high, so it naturally affected the *k* of the 2fsng suffix *-(i)k* (derived from OA *-ki*) → *-(i)č* (Gulf dialects) (see notes on *kaškaša* in chapter 1, and in the Glossary).

In modern times of mass literacy, the affricate has to some degree been ‘corrected’ by many speakers to *k* in much of the lexicon, but the 2fsng suffix has resisted this change, as it is the feature which carries the gender distinction, *-k* (masc) versus *-ć /č* (fem).

The origin of the ‘southern’ *-(i)š* (see *šinšinna* in chapter 1, and in the Glossary) is quite different. Here, unlike in the north, there was no general affrication of *k* to *ć* or *č*. So where did the *-(i)š* in forms such as *bēt-iš* and *abū-š* come from? If we look beyond the Arabic dialects of the area, we find a possible answer. In all of the MSALs, the 2fsng suffix is also *-š*. Furthermore, in the vocabularies of all of these languages, there is evidence that at some time, probably in the distant past, there may have been a more general phonological shift from a common Semitic *k* to *š*. Some examples (Holes 2006a: 32):

		Compare Arabic (and other Semitic languages)
Mehri, Jibbālī, Soqotri, Ḥarsūsī	<i>š-b-d</i> 'liver'	<i>k-b-d</i>
Mehri	<i>š-m-m</i> 'teat-mask'	<i>k-m-m</i>
Jibbālī	<i>š-r-š</i> 'belly'	<i>k-r-š</i>
Soqotri	<i>k-b-š-b</i> 'star'	<i>k-b-k-b</i>
Soqotri	<i>b-š-y</i> 'to weep'	<i>b-k-y</i>

We do not know for certain what the position was in long-dead Ḥimyaritic, an ancient pre- and post-Islamic language of Yemen. Modern work on Yemeni Arabic dialect geography (see the maps in Behnstedt 1985), when compared with what the early medieval geographer Hamdānī (d. 946) and somewhat later Arab philologists have to say about both Ḥimyaritic and the Yemeni Arabic dialects of their time (Rabin 1951: 43–50), hints at least at the possibility that in its spoken form Ḥimyaritic may have had *-š* for the 2fsng suffix (Holes 1991: 662–3), but in the (small number) of written inscriptions in that language so far discovered it is not attested, and nor is it attested in Ancient Ethio-Semitic (Stein 2008; Watson, this volume). Ḥimyaritic speakers dominated first the south, and then the whole of Yemen for several centuries before the Islamic conquests. Eventually, Ḥimyaritic was replaced by Arabic, and the MSALs have been so heavily influenced by Arabic in the last thousand years or so that it is now impossible to know how far an ancient palatalization *k* → *š* may originally have gone. The probability is that the 2fsng suffix *-(i)š*, so widespread in the Arabic dialects of Yemen, is an old areal feature, a remnant of the languages spoken in the area before it became fully Arabized. But the south Arabians who gradually lost their original languages and adopted Arabic, retained certain structural elements, among them the *-(i)š* suffix.<sup>35</sup> It is also a feature of the modern Ethio-Semitic languages Amharic, Gurage, and Harari spoken on the other side of the Red Sea. But how did it spread so widely to regions far from south-western Arabia? We know that there were large-scale pre-Islamic migrations of south Arabians east into Oman, north-east to ancient Bahrain and from there down the Gulf coast to the Tuwām area on the border between the present-day UAE and Oman (Wilkinson 1987: 73, 76–7). By the time these happened, the migrants would have either already become speakers of Arabic dialects influenced by south Arabian languages, or been bilingual in Arabic and their local language (as all speakers of MSALs in Yemen and Oman are today). The *-(i)š* suffix would most likely have been one feature of the language(s) that the migrants took with them. This scenario would explain why, and not just in the matter of the suffixed *-(i)š*, there is such a striking resemblance between the Bahārna dialects of Bahrain and eastern Arabia, and those of Oman and southern Yemen (Holes 2006a).

But one thing that seems certain is that the *-(i)š* suffix did not arise via a recent change *č* → *š*, either in just this suffix, or via a more general phonological change.

<sup>35</sup> Another possible retention, though less widespread, is the 'k-perfect', in which instead of the *-t* suffixes of Arabic 2nd-person s-stem verbs, there are *-k* suffixes.

The evidence is as follows. The village Baḥārna dialects of Bahrain all have the *-(i)š* suffix, and the group of them least affected by outside influences at the time of my fieldwork had *-(i)č* for the *masculine* form and *-čim* for common pl. These forms arose via a historically *unconditioned* process of affrication which affected /k/ across the board, and was quite different from what happened in the dialect of the Sunnī ʿArab, in which the process of affrication was *conditioned*, affecting *k* in front-vowel environments (especially /i/) only. In the light of this, the village Baḥārna system of 2nd-person suffix pronoun forms, *-(i)č* (m), *-(i)š* (f), *-čim* (com pl), is readily explicable: the 2fsng was *already* of the form *-(i)š*, having been imported with the migrations from south-western Arabia, when, at a later stage, the unconditioned affrication of /k/ occurred and affected the 2msng and com pl forms as it affected everything else. In the northern Omani town of al-Ḥamra and the mountain villages above it in the Jabal Shams area, exactly these same suffix pronoun forms also occur (but with a gender distinction in the pl), together with the unconditioned affrication of /k/. These and other similarities in basic phonology and morphology make it hard to resist the conclusion that these village Omani dialects have a similar linguistic history to the dialects of the Baḥārna (see §5.2).

### 5.1.3.2 The infix *-n(n)-*

All the dialects which have the *-in(n)-* infix have it in the m and fsng, but the southern Yemeni dialects, and the Omani dialects which have it,<sup>36</sup> have the complete and probably older paradigm, inserting the infix with mpl and fpl forms also.

#### 5.1.3.2.1 Southern Yemen

- (34) *maḥna ši ʿāwiz-īn-inn-iš*  
 not-we thing need.ap-mpl-in-you.f  
 ‘We (mpl) don’t want you (fsng) at all’,
- (35) *sāriq-āt-inn-ak*  
 rob.ap-fpl-in-you.m  
 ‘(They (fpl)) will rob you (m)’

#### 5.1.3.2.2 Oman

Here the mpl simply doubles the *-n-*, rather than employing the full *-n(n)-* affix, e.g.

- (36) *kātb-īn-n-uh*  
 write.ap-mpl-n-it  
 ‘(They (mpl)) have written it’

The fpl is as in south Yemen, e.g.

<sup>36</sup> This feature is conspicuous by its absence (there seem to be no data, one way or the other) from Davey’s 2013 study of the coastal dialect of Dhofar: after observing (p. 33) that it is one of the distinctive features of the dialects of northern Oman, the author makes no further comment on it.

- (37) *il-ḥarīm mkaffiy-āt-in-hum*  
 the-women manage.ap-fpl-in-them  
 'The women (by themselves) can manage them'

In the dialects of the Baḥārna, there is no gender distinction in the pl verb, and no *-in(n)-* insert in the ap pl form, so, e.g. *kātbīn-ah* 'they (com pl) have written it'.

In Omani Arabic, I recorded examples of the *-in(n)-* infix also occurring between finite verbs and their pronoun objects, e.g. *šaxbūt yidaḡḡit-in-hum ḡaḡt* '(Sheikh) Shakhbūt<sup>37</sup> was greatly oppressing them'; *yīšill-in-ha* 'he removes them' (two of many examples from Wādī Aswad, Durūc 'bedouin' dialect); and this use of the infix also occurs in the neighbouring UAE, e.g. *nsaww-inn-ah* 'we do it' (Abu Dhabi, *nabaṭī* poetry) as it does occasionally also in the Baḥārna colloquial poetry of Bahrain, but here as an *-an(n)-*infix, e.g. *abusṭ-ann-ah tara* 'I'm going to knock him flat'.<sup>38</sup> Forms of this latter type have also been reported for southern Iraq by Ingham (1997: 16) but apparently only with 1st-person verbs. Unlike the construction with the ap that has the infix obligatorily in those dialects where it occurs, however, it is optional with finite verbs and occurs only occasionally.

The evidence is fragmentary and incomplete, but it is possible that what we are looking at here are the remnants of a system for marking object pronouns that may have had its origins in south-western Arabia and was once more widely applied across the verb system, at least in some eastern and south-eastern Arabian dialects, but is now in recession. Although there have been sporadic attestations of the *-in(n)-* infix in dialects on the northern fringes of Arabia,<sup>39</sup> neither it, nor the *-(i)š* 2fsng suffix, have been attested in any part of central Arabia, the Hijaz, or anywhere on the Gulf coast north of Bahrain. As far as I know, they have not been reported either for any Qatari dialect.

<sup>37</sup> Shakhbūt bin Sulṭān Āl Nahayān (c.1905–89) Ruler of Abu Dhabi 1928–66.

<sup>38</sup> It is important to distinguish this *syntactically motivated* infix construction from the similar-looking, but *phonologically motivated* doubling of the final *-n* on fpl verbs, as in Omani forms such as *ḡan-n-ah u ʿaṭan-n-ah dawa* 'they (fpl) came and gave (fpl) him medicine'. This type of *-n* doubling is part of a Gulf-wide phenomenon which applies not just to fpl verbs but to other word classes ending in *-n* when they occur with vowel-initial suffixes, e.g. prepositions such as *min* and *ʿan* 'from', which give forms of the type *min-n-ak* 'from you' and *ʿan-n-i* 'from me', and complementizers such as *čin-* 'as if', which gives *čin-n-ak* 'as if you...'. When these forms have consonant-initial suffixes there is no doubling, e.g. *ḡan-kum* 'they (fpl) came to you (pl)', *min-kum* 'from you (m pl)', *čin-kum* 'as if you (m pl)...'.

<sup>39</sup> There are several examples in a 'bedouin' text of Wetzstein's from the Syrian desert (1868: 191, n. 2), but usage seems inconsistent, e.g. *šāyif-inn-ah* 'having seen him' and *dāḡil-inn-ah* 'having crept up on him' (p. 75) are followed a couple of lines later by similar constructions which do not have the infix: *mwaššlak* 'have brought you' and *šāyibuh* 'has affected him' (both p. 75). Wetzstein makes no comment on why there should be this difference. Socin (1901 pt III: 187) declares that the infix construction does not occur in Najd, and it has not been reported either in more recent studies, such as Ingham 1994a. Recent work on inscriptions in a pre-Islamic Semitic language, Safaitic, of eastern Syria has thrown up some examples of p-stem verbs with pronoun suffixes which also contain an infix *-n-* suffix whose pronunciation may have been *-nn-* (Al-Jallad 2015: 97–8), e.g. \**yūʿawwir-inn-uh* in the formula:

'wr       l- ḡ       y'wr -nh  
 go blind    who    he-efface-n-it  
 'may he who would efface it (= the inscription) go blind'



In sum, the dialects in which these two features, *-iš* and *-in(n)-*, occur are, in Arabian terms, *southern and geographically peripheral*, forming a broken chain which runs around the coast of Arabia from Bahrain in the east, through the UAE and Oman in the south-east, and then round the southern coast of Arabia to Dhofār and as far west as the western Ḥaḍramawt<sup>40</sup> (see Maps 5.1, 5.2).

Evidence for the antiquity of the *-in(n)-* infix in the suffixed ap comes from an unexpected source. This same construction, very rare in the Arabic dialects as a whole, occurs in the surviving Arabic *Sprachinseln* of Transoxania, brought there by the Arab conquests of the early eighth century AD, but cut off from ‘heartland’ Arabic-speaking areas from no later than AD 1000, possibly much earlier.<sup>41</sup> The dialects of a group of villages in the northern Iranian province of Khorasān, on the Turkmenistan border, have the construction in exactly the same form in which it is found in eastern and southern Arabian dialects today. In Bukhara (= modern Uzbek) Arabic, and also in Afghan Arabic, which is a nineteenth-century offshoot of the latter, the construction is also found, but in a remodelled form in which the pronominal suffix attached to the infix *-in(n)-* refers not to the object of the ap but to its subject, and any object pronoun is suffixed to that. So first compare a Khorasānī example (Seeger 2002: 635):

- (38) *āxiḍ-t-inn-ah*  
 take.ap-f-in-him  
 ‘I (f)/you (fsng)/she have/has married him’

with its structurally identical Bahraini (and Omani, S. Yemeni) equivalent:

- (39) *māxiḍ-t-inn-ah*  
 take.ap-f-in-him  
 ‘I (f)/you (fsng)/she have/has married him’

These are taken to be examples of the original construction. Now compare these with an example from Bukhara, Uzbekistan (Zimmermann 2009: 620):

- (40) *zorb-in-ak-āh*  
 beat.ap-in-you.m-him  
 ‘You (m) have beaten him’

The mechanism of exactly how this type of multi-suffixed construction arose (and the same type occurs in Afghan Arabic, its recent offshoot) is unclear.

<sup>40</sup> As already noted, while the *-(i)š* suffix is the norm in Dhofār, it is unclear whether the *-in(n)-* infix occurs there.

<sup>41</sup> The isolated Arabic dialects of Central Asia contain a mix of phonological, morphological, and lexical features still in use in the dialects of Iraq and eastern and south-eastern Arabia. Some features have an unmistakable Iraqi origin, such as the use of *fad/ fard* as an indefinite article; others, such as the *-in(n)-* infix described here, are typical of eastern, south-eastern, and south-western Arabian dialects. Yet others are general to many eastern Arabic dialects on a broader canvas, such as ‘dialectal *tanwin*’, the suffixing of an adnominal linker *-in* to indefinite nouns before modifying adjectives and phrases, e.g. *bint-in zēna* ‘a nice girl’. This picture of Central Asian Arabic dialects—as a mix of elements from Iraq and southern Arabia—is consonant with what the early Arab historians tell us about the composition of the armies which conquered the region, which drew on, among others, various Iraqi and eastern Arabian tribes. See Holes 2011a.

As well as in the Central Asian dialects, the *-in(n)-* infix (as well as variants of it) also turns up in the dialects of eastern Sudan and in some dialects of Nigeria, where it is structurally identical with the equivalent form in eastern/south-eastern Arabia, e.g. Shukriyya, eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 284):

- (41) *ğāy-āt-ann-ik*  
 come to.ap-fpl-in-you.m  
 ‘They (fpl) come to you’

Bagirmi, Nigeria (Owens 1993a: 102):

- (42) *ana šayf-inn-e*  
 Isee.ap-in-him  
 ‘I have seen him’

Owens argues (2006: 161) that the rarity of this feature in the Arabic dialects as a whole, coupled with its far-flung and scattered geographical distribution, argues against chance polygenesis. The obvious explanation is that it arose in one geographical area—eastern and southern Arabia, where it still lives on—and was ‘exported’ by migrations, starting at a very early period. Although the historical record is patchy, this hypothesis is supported by what we know of population movements. One of the best documented is in a local Omani history, written in the eleventh century AD, which reports that an army of Azd and ‘Abd al-Qays tribesmen (the tribes which formed much of the oldest Arab population of Bahrain, the southern Gulf and Oman), and which numbered about 3,000, crossed the Gulf from Julanda (what is now Rās al-Khayma) to southern Iran in around AD 694 (Hinds 1984; 1991: 14–15). They seem to have been absorbed into the armies which crossed into Transoxania from their main base in Basra, southern Iraq, and conquered Bukhāra (AD 713) and Samarkand. The main army of invasion, which was cantoned in Basra, also had large Azd and ‘Abd al-Qays elements of south Arabian origin. These are the tribes whose modern descendants have the *-n(n)-* infix in their dialect. At a (much?) later date (c. the fourteenth century), the same construction went westwards into southern Egypt and Sudan, where it has left traces in dialects of the east of the country. From there, there was a further westerly migration to the Sāhil region, where it is also found (Owens 2006: 162, map 4). A scenario like this would explain why this rare construction turns up in the Arabic dialects of such scattered and remote areas as eastern Arabia, Central Asia, Eastern Sudan, and northern Nigeria. Multiple occurrences of polygenesis seem highly unlikely, especially in the light of the support for the contrary theory provided by indigenous accounts of historical population movements, incomplete though these are.

## 5.2 DIALECT TYPOLOGY

The previous section looked at Gulf lexical and morphological language elements of considerable antiquity that originated outside the Gulf region. We now turn to questions of Gulf dialect typology. Historically, the contemporary Gulf dialects were formed out of two basic types generically referred to in the literature as ‘bedouin’

(*badawī*) and ‘sedentary’ (*ḥaḍārī*) (here referred to respectively as Type A and Type B). These labels ceased to reflect actual lifestyle differences many decades ago, and have since evolved into genealogy-based descriptors in societies which are now to all intents and purposes fully sedentary, but native-born Gulf Arabs still readily classify themselves and their communities in terms of one or the other. Likewise, these terms continue to be used in Arabic dialectology to denote discrete sets of variants on a large number of variables, though, as noted in the Introduction to this volume, the list of variants which fall on either side of the ‘bedouin’/ ‘sedentary’ divide is not the same everywhere. Moreover, as we shall see, one of the results of the increased dialect contact entailed by increased urbanization, more widespread education, and contemporary employment patterns has been the erosion and levelling of many of these historical dialect differences.

But before we turn to details of the differences between the A and B types in the modern Gulf, it should be noted that, compared to the dialects of central Arabia, in the period up to the mid-1970s, the Gulf dialects *as a whole* (with the partial exception of Oman) underwent a number of ‘reductional’ changes in their morpho-syntax, among the most important of which are:

- (1) loss of gender distinctions in the plural forms of the verb: total loss in Kuwait,<sup>42</sup> in Bahrain, and in some, but not all Qatari and UAE dialects; but complete retention in all Omani dialects, ‘bedouin’ or ‘sedentary’.
- (2) loss of the ‘internal’ (apophonic) passive in favour of passivization by means of the prefix *in-*: almost total loss in Kuwait and Bahrain (only ‘fossilized’ forms remain<sup>43</sup>); partial retention in Qatar and the UAE; widespread retention in all Omani dialects.
- (3) loss of the suffix *-in* (the ‘adnominal linker’) on the indefinite noun in N + Adj and other types of modified noun phrase (see Ferrando, this volume): total loss in Kuwait; elsewhere reduced to a relic feature in a few phrase types.<sup>44</sup>
- (4) the innovation of an analytic genitive involving a particle, usually *ḥagg* and/or *māl* (and in some Omani dialects *ḥāl*) which in many types of noun–noun relationship replaces the synthetic ‘construct state’: this innovation is common to all.

It appears from this that there is an association between economic and educational development and ‘reductional’ language change. In the northern Gulf (Bahrain and Kuwait), where this development began earliest (the 1930s and 1940s), the changes are most advanced; in Qatar and the UAE (the 1950s and 1960s), in the central/southern Gulf, there is still some retention of the old features; in Oman, the extreme

<sup>42</sup> Vestiges of fpl verb forms survived in Kuwait in the Dōsiri tribal dialect of Kuwait until the late 1950s, as reported in Johnstone 1961: 255, n. 7. The Dawāsir were at that time relatively recent arrivals in Kuwait—their tribal *dīra* is in south-western Najd—and Johnstone (1964: 85) notes that this was still reflected in aspects of their dialect, besides the survival of fpl forms, such as the *-(i)š* 2fsng pronominal suffix, a stereotypically southern Arabian feature.

<sup>43</sup> An exception here are certain Baḥārna village dialects in Bahrain, in which the apophonic passive still seems to be productive, but unpredictably (see Holes 2016: 166–8 for examples).

<sup>44</sup> However, in colloquial poetry and formulaic utterances such as proverbs, riddles, etc., this feature is still quite common, even in dialects where it has virtually disappeared from normal speech.

south, which began its modern renaissance only after the accession of the present Sultan in 1970, the changes are least advanced, especially in rural areas.

### 5.2.1 TYPE A, 'BEDOUIN'-TYPE

The speakers of these dialects are known as 'Arab ('tribal Arabs'), and, though no longer bedouin in lifestyle, regard themselves as part of the tribal genealogical structure of Arabia. The dialects of the Gulf 'Arab can be subdivided into two main groups, A1 and A2:

- (A1) These are the dialects of speakers whose ancestors migrated to the Gulf coast from Najd, central Arabia, or from other areas of the Arabian interior further south. Migration has been episodic rather than continuous, the last large-scale migrations, to Qatar and Bahrain from Najd, and to the Abu Dhabi coast from the Liwa Oasis, being in the mid to late eighteenth century. A1 dialects are found in every Gulf country, including Oman along its northern border with the UAE, and have local variations. Since transplantation to the Gulf coast, they have diverged from those of the Arabian interior, but all still bear an obvious resemblance to them and to each other. There is no doubt that the A1 type has become the socially dominant type in the Gulf as a whole.
- (A2) These are the dialects of old coastal populations whose presence predates the eighteenth-century Najdi migrations, and which still show some distinctive features not shared with type A1, type B, or the dialects of central Arabia. This type of dialect appears to have originally been spoken by communities of seafaring traders, notably the so-called *Ḥwala*. Speakers of this type of dialect are (or were) found on the coasts of southern Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, northern Qatar, and the UAE. The A2 speakers are all, like the A1 speakers, Sunnīs, and the two dialects are now very similar to each other, probably as a result of long-term contact between them. It is unclear at present whether the A2 dialect type is found in Oman.

### 5.2.2 TYPE B, 'SEDENTARY' TYPE

These are what we termed earlier the ancient 'peripheral' dialects of eastern, south-eastern, and south-western Arabia, whose presence in the Gulf region, like that of the A2 dialect, predates that of the A1 dialects. The B dialects are closely related to each other and spoken by the descendants of old, sedentarized (not recently) populations, who until the recent past worked as farmers, fisherman, and artisans of various types. These dialects can be roughly divided into three groups, B1, B2, and B3:

- (B1) The dialects of the Baḥārna of Bahrain and neighbouring eastern Saudi Arabia. These dialects are one of the badges of what, for at least two centuries, has been a marginalized and disadvantaged social group: the indigenous Arabic-speaking Shī'a of eastern Arabia. Even at the time of my fieldwork in Bahrain in the 1970s many B1 dialect features were becoming recessive, particularly in urban areas and among the younger generations. More recent research by

al-Qouz (2009) has shown that some of these features have now virtually disappeared from the speech of children in urban B1 communities.

- (B2) The dialects of the mountain villages and river valleys of northern Oman (the Jabal Shams and Jabal Akhḍar regions). These dialects diverge in some respects, mainly phonological, from the main group of ‘sedentary’ dialects spoken in the Omani capital, Muscat, and the surrounding lowlands (see B3). There are also some differences between them and the B1 dialects, but the B1–B2 similarities are many and striking. Confessionally, B2 speakers are mainly if not entirely Ibāḍī Muslims.
- (B3) The dialects of the Capital Area of Oman (Muscat, Muṭṭraḥ, Ruwī) and inland towns and villages of the northern area of the Sultanate (e.g. Nizwa, Bahla, Izki, Muḍaibi). B3 speakers are mainly Ibāḍīs.

Table 5.2 presents some of the salient phonological and morphological differences between these five types. The A1, A2, and B1 forms are from Bahrain (in the B1 case from the most conservative village dialects); the B2 and B3 forms are from Oman, as described.

Commentary: we will review here the major fault-lines in this table, and review how sociolinguistic factors are affecting them:

**TABLE 5.2 Some salient A/B dialectal contrasts in Bahrain and Oman**

	dialect type:	A1 Bahrain	A2 Bahrain	B1 Bahrain	B2 Oman	B3 Oman
v1	reflexes of OA /q/	g and ġ	g and ġ	k	k	q
v2	reflexes of OA /k/	k and č	k and č	č	č	k
v3	reflex of OA /ğ/	y	y	ğ	ğ	g
v4	reflex of OA /t/	<u>t</u>	<u>t</u>	f	<u>t</u>	<u>t</u>
v5	ghawa-syndrome	yes	no	no	no	no
v6	2 suffix pron					
	m	-(i)k	-(i)k	-(i)č	-(i)č	-(a)k
	f	-(i)č	-(i)č	-(i)š	-(i)š	-(i)š
	mpl	-kum	-kum	-čim	-čim	-kum
	fpl	-kum	-kum	-čim	-čin	-kin
v7	2fsng independ pron	inti/ intay	inti/ intay	intīn	inti	inti
v8	2pl independ pron					
	m	intu/ intaw	intu/ intaw	intūn	intu	intu
	f	intu/ intaw	intu/ intaw	intūn	intan	intan
v9	-in(n)- infix on suffixed ap	no	no	yes	yes	yes
v10	interrog clitic suffix -ə	no	no	yes	yes	yes
v11	3fsng s-stem, e.g. ‘she wrote’	ktibat	kitbat	katabat	katabat	katabat
v12	1sng s-stem, e.g. ‘I wrote’	kitabt	kitbēt	katabt	katabt	katabt

### 5.2.2.1 Dialects A1 and A2

These two dialects are very similar, the main differences being:

1. V5: the so-called *ghawa*-syndrome

This is a classic marker of the ‘bedouin’ dialects of Najd and the offshoot A1 dialects of the Gulf States. It involves the resyllabification of words on the pattern  $C_1aC_2C_3v(C_4)$  to  $C_1C_2aC_3v(C_4)$  whenever  $C_2$  is one of /x, ġ, ħ, ʕ, h/. So, e.g. *gahwa* ‘coffee’ becomes *ghawa*, *baġdād* ‘Baghdad’ *bġadād*, *ʔaħmar* ‘red’ *ħamar*. However, at the time of my fieldwork in the 1970s, it had become uncommon in the A2 dialect of the Hwala, which may mean the A2 dialect never originally had such forms, but acquired them from the A1 dialects via contact. The syndrome was recessive in the A1 community also.

2. V11 and V12: pattern I s-stem verb morphology

V11: with a vowel-initial suffix (e.g. 3fsng -*at*), we get *kitb-at*-type forms in A1, which are also the norm in Najd and quintessentially ‘bedouin’. In the A2 dialect, on the other hand, the shape of the strong verb s-stem is CvCC- throughout the paradigm, giving *kitb-at*-type forms. This latter type of form is common in urban and village communities with a longer history of sedentarization in the Gulf region and Mesopotamia, including Baghdad.

V12: when the personal suffix is consonant-initial (e.g. 1sng -*t*), an -*ē*- infix is inserted between the stem and the suffix in the A2 dialect but not in A1, such as the example *kitb-ēt* ‘I wrote’ in the tabled example. In the dialects that have it, this infix was historically generalized to all types of stem, not just, as in most Arabic dialects, to geminate verbs such as *ħabbēt* ‘I loved’ and those with a final glottal such as *garēt* ‘I read’, but also to hollow verbs, as in *gālēt* ‘I said’ and *rāħēt* ‘I went’, rather than *gilt* and *riħt*, thus eliminating the allomorphy in the stem dependent on the syllabic shape of the inflection. The template could be applied to all derived patterns, e.g. pattern II *ġarribēt* ‘I tried’, pattern V *tzawwiġēt* ‘I got married’, pattern X (hollow) *istaḡādēt* ‘I benefitted’, etc. (Holes 2012).

Let us take a brief look at the history and known geographical distribution of these unusual forms:

#### 5.2.2.1.1 Mesopotamia and southern Iraq

Verbs with an infixed -*ē*- are first mentioned in the literature by Meissner (1903: xli) in incidental remarks on the dialect of the Marsh Arabs. Ingham, in research done in the early 1970s, notes them as a distinctive feature of the dialects of what he terms the ‘urban’ population of riverine cultivators in neighbouring Khūzistān, the Arabic-speaking province of southern Iran (1997: 12). Erwin (1963: 97–9) gives examples for patterns IV, VII, VIII, and X of the hollow verb in the Muslim dialect of Baghdad, but states that the infixed -*ē*- form does not occur in any strong verb stem, simple or derived, nor in pattern II of the hollow verb. Jastrow (2007: 421–2) records the infixed form for pattern I strong verbs in Basra, e.g. *kitbēt*, etc., while the contemporary Iraqi colloquial poet, ‘Abbās Jijān, who hails from that city, occasionally uses infixed forms with hollow verbs and derived patterns in his poetry, e.g. *qarrirēt* (pattern II) ‘you

decided', *hāḡēt* (pattern I hollow) 'you got excited' (Holes 2011c: 193). These forms thus appear quite widespread in Iraq, from Baghdad south. In southern Iraq any verb type can have this infix, whereas in Baghdad it is limited to hollow verbs of a few patterns and occurs only in the Muslim dialect.

#### 5.2.2.1.2 *Gulf*

In the Gulf of the late 1950s, Johnstone noted forms of this type for Bahrain and northern Qatar, commenting that they 'are stigmatized by native speakers as vulgar, but they were extensively used nevertheless' (1967: 92, 110). By the time of my fieldwork in Bahrain twenty years later, they were, as already noted, relatively rare and largely confined to the speech of illiterate elderly women. In his *Qaṣā'id Sha'biyya* ('Popular Odes'), published in 1970, the Bahraini colloquial poet 'Abdurrahmān Rafī' (b. Manāma, 1936, d. 2015) has a lengthy humorous poem which rhymes in *-ēt* on the joys and sorrows of getting married, and he deploys dozens of these infixed forms, apparently for comic effect. According to the Kuwaiti linguist 'Abdul-Muḥsin 'Alī Dashtī (p.c. 2010), infixed forms are also found in the Arabic speech of Fōdar, an island off the Iranian coast near Bushire, from which some communities (known as Fawādīra) migrated to Kuwait. Another Kuwaiti linguist, Dr Yousuf al-Bader (p.c. 2014) confirmed to me recently that these forms are still used 'by many Kuwaitis'. As for the dialects of the southern Gulf, the descriptions we have are patchy, but I have encountered sporadic examples in the dialect poetry of the UAE (e.g. *'ašširēt* 'I signalled'), which suggest infixed forms occur there too.

To sum up: the evidence suggests that the s-stem form with the *-ē-* infix is typical of the speech of old-established sedentary communities from Baghdad in the north through southern Iraq and along the Gulf coast as far south as the UAE. This form is not of Najdi origin. Unrestricted use of the form occurs throughout the Gulf and in southern Iraq, but there are morphological and communal restrictions in Baghdad. Much further afield, similar-looking forms have been reported for eastern Sudan (Reichmuth 1983: 244),<sup>45</sup> Chad (Singer 1980: 264),<sup>46</sup> and for some dialects in Morocco and Algeria (Singer 1980: 264),<sup>47</sup> though in the latter case the phenomenon is apparently limited to patterns VII and VIII hollow verbs, which is similar to their distribution in the Muslim dialect of Baghdad. Like the *-in(n)-* participial infix of the B dialects, the A2 *-ē-* verbal infix is a dialectal feature which is uncommon in the Arabic dialects as a whole, but is widely dispersed geographically. It too seems likely to have originated in coastal Arabia and to have been 'exported' from there, though it has a history and a communal distribution in Arabia quite different from those of the *-in(n)-* infix.

<sup>45</sup> Reichmuth gives the striking example *kannēt wēn?* 'Where were you?' from the hollow verb *kān* 'to be'.

<sup>46</sup> Singer gives *gammēta* 'You set off' from the hollow verb *gām* 'to get up, start off'. In both this and the example given by Reichmuth there seems to have been shortening of the long stem vowel in a presumably original *\*kānēt*, *\*gāmēt* and the doubling of the final stem radical to give these stems the appearance of geminates, which is the stem type in which the *-ē-* infix routinely occurs in virtually all Arabic dialects.

<sup>47</sup> *ihṭāzēt* 'I needed' (Sa'īda, Algeria), *ihṭāzīt* (Tetouan, Morocco), *inbā'īt* 'you were sold' (Tlemcen, Algeria).

At the time of my fieldwork in Bahrain in the mid-1970s, v11 A2 *kitbat*-type and A1 *ktibat*-type variants (and the corresponding 3com pl forms *kitbaw* and *ktibaw*) were seemingly in free variation in the A communities, but with the A2 *kitbat*-type spreading as part of a shift towards more ‘neutral’ (but still ‘A’) forms in the speech of younger speakers. The same was true, a fortiori, of the v12 variants: but here it was the saliently A2 forms with the *-ē-* infix which were becoming recessive to the point where many A2 speakers did not use them at all. I recorded only around fifty examples in a database of many thousands of words of A2 dialect speech in Bahrain.<sup>48</sup> It seemed, in other words, that an s-stem verb paradigm was in the process of formation in the A community, in which forms marked as typical of either the A1 group alone or the A2 group alone were being levelled out.

### 5.2.2.2 Dialects A1 and B1

Historically, the differences between these two types were radical and all-pervasive, though in recent years there has been a narrowing of the gap between them, as described at various points in this section. Many other features with communally contrasting reflexes could have been adduced, but those listed in Table 5.2 are among the most salient.

#### 1. v1 and v2: reflexes of OA /q/ and /k/

The classic ‘bedouin’–‘sedentary’ phonological contrast is in the treatment of OA /q/ which, in ‘bedouin’-descended dialects everywhere, is voiced (most often /g/), and in ‘sedentary’ dialects, voiceless (/q/ or /k/ or /ʔ/). From this ancient bifurcation sprang further local differences. In the Gulf, in the A1 dialects, /g/ < OA /q/ and OA /k/ underwent subsequent *conditioned* affrication to /č/ and /ğ/ respectively in front vowel environments only (but with some lexical exceptions), viz.:

	↗/g/ (back-vowel environments)
OA/q/ →	↘/ğ/ (front-vowel environments)
	↗/k/ (back-vowel environments)
OA/k/ →	↘/č/ (front-vowel environments)

The outcome of these changes was thus a pair of voiced/voiceless velar stops and a matching pair of alveolar affricates.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Most of the examples I recorded were in the speech of mature women attending Illiteracy Eradication classes. Interestingly, verb forms with the *-ē-* infix are now, forty years later, being used by youthful Bahraini internet posters to lend colour to made-up stories told in what the posters imagine to be ‘old-fashioned’ Muharragi speech. This is a sure sign that such forms are now dying out, if not already dead, and regarded as relics of another age. See Holes 2016: 476–7.

<sup>49</sup> In the A dialects, these contrasts have acquired a morphological role, marking number in some classes of nouns (e.g. *firiğ* ‘neighbourhood’ pl *firgān*), and s-stem versus p-stem in some verbs, e.g. *wāhag* ‘he annoyed’, *yiwāhiğ* ‘he annoys’.



In the B1 dialects, by contrast, there was a ‘chain-shift’: OA /q/ was unconditionally fronted to /k/ and, as a knock-on effect, original OA /k/ fronted and unconditionally affricated to /č/ (though, again, with some lexical exceptions) viz.:

OA /q/ → /k/ (all environments)

OA /k/ → /č/ (all environments)

These historical developments gave rise to A1/B1 contrasts (and coincidences) such as those in Table 5.3.

**TABLE 5.3 Some typical communal dialect contrasts in Bahrain**

OA	A1	B1
<i>qāla</i> ‘to say’	<i>gāl/ yigūl</i>	<i>kāl/ yikūl</i>
<i>quddām</i> ‘in front’	<i>ġiddām</i>	<i>kiddām</i>
<i>ṣidq</i> ‘truth’	<i>ṣidġ</i>	<i>ṣidk</i>
<i>raqīq</i> ‘delicate, thin’	<i>raqġiġ</i>	<i>rakik</i>
<i>kull</i> ‘all’	<i>kill</i>	<i>čill</i>
<i>yaʔkulu</i> ‘he eats’	<i>yākil</i>	<i>yāčil</i>
<i>šawk</i> ‘thorn’	<i>šōk</i>	<i>šōč</i>
<i>kaṭīr</i> ‘many’	<i>čiṭīr</i>	<i>kaḡīr</i>
<i>akṭar</i> ‘more’	<i>akṭar</i>	<i>ačfar</i>
<i>kiṭr</i> ‘amount’	<i>čiṭīr</i>	<i>kufur</i>
<i>kubr</i> ‘age, size’	<i>kubur</i>	<i>čubur</i>
<i>akbar</i> ‘older, bigger’	<i>akbar</i>	<i>ačbar</i>
<i>kam</i> ‘how much?’	<i>čam</i>	<i>čam</i>
<i>kitāb</i> ‘book’	<i>kitāb</i>	<i>kitāb</i>
<i>kuntu</i> ‘I was’	<i>kint</i>	<i>kint</i>

The A1 system variants are without a doubt now regarded as the ‘Gulf norm’, resulting in the abandonment of saliently B1 variants such as these, especially in public and cross-dialectal speech contexts.

2. v3 and v4: reflexes of OA /t/ and /ğ/

These A1 and B1 reflexes are paired here for sociolinguistic reasons:

The A1 dialects preserved the OA interdentalals /t̪, d̪, ɖ̪/, whereas the corresponding reflexes in the B1 dialects are /f, d, ɖ/ respectively. The A1 variants ‘agree’ with the CLA/MSA values of these variables and therefore sound ‘more correct’, whereas the B1 dialect variants deviate from them. The /f/ variant in particular is unusual in the Gulf dialects<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> /f/ < /t̪/ is noted by Landberg (1901: 538 and 1920–42: 244–5) as ‘very frequent in all the southern dialects’ (sc of Yemen), including the coast. In the southern Gulf, ‘Ubayd (2013: 35) notes it as a categorical feature of the ‘old Baḡārna’ (*qudāmā l-baḡārna*) dialect of Abu Dhabi spoken now only by the ‘elderly’

(and, indeed, in the Arabic dialects as a whole). This variable is ‘high-profile’, as it occurs in many common words, such as the numbers ‘two’, ‘three’, and ‘eight’, which in the B1 dialect are pronounced *ifnēn*, *falāfa*, and *famānya*.

In the case of the variants of OA /ǧ/, we have the opposite situation: the B1 dialects generally<sup>51</sup> have /ǧ/, which is the same as its value in CLA/MSA, while the A1 (and A2) dialect has a ‘deviant’ continuant value, /y/, which occurs in all positions, as is the case in other Gulf A1 (and A2) dialects in Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman, e.g. *yāb/ iyīb* ‘to bring’, *maylis* ‘sitting room’, *daray* ‘ladder, steps’, in contrast to B1 *ǧāb/ iǧīb*, etc.

The A1 and B1 speakers I recorded in the 1970s treated these variables in a fashion which suggested that the normative pull of ‘correct’ pronunciation on their respective ‘deviant’ pronunciations was very different. The A1 speakers of all educational levels, despite the ‘deviant’ status of their /y/ < OA /ǧ/, maintained it categorically; but the B1 speakers tended to switch from ‘deviant’ /f/ < OA /t/ to /t/, those with some education being especially liable to do this. Moreover, at the same time, some of these B1 speakers showed a slight tendency to switch away from their ‘correct’ /ǧ/ to ‘deviant’ /y/. The conclusions to be drawn from this behaviour are that:

- (i) variants marked as lacking both covert (= local Gulf) and overt (= MSA) prestige, such as B1 /f/ < OA /t/, are very likely to be zeroed-out;
- (ii) on the other hand, variants which enjoy covert, but lack overt prestige, such as A1 /y/ < OA /ǧ/, can and do resist the overt (= MSA) pressure;
- (iii) not only that—such variants may actually attract speakers of dialects whose variant is overtly ‘correct’ but is seen, in the local context, as associated with a low social status, such as /ǧ/ < OA /ǧ/.

This asymmetrical behaviour is the product of pressures in the local situation in Bahrain. In nearby Kuwait, where the social dynamics are different, the very same /y/ < OA /ǧ/ which in Bahrain has become a marker of the A1 dialect of the Sunnī ‘Arab, is used by all and has no special sectarian (or indeed any other) colouring. This is a good illustration of what Ingham has termed the ‘multivalency’ of linguistic features, whereby the ‘same’ feature produced by a single historical process has later acquired different local significances because of a different set of social dynamics. The same thing applies to, inter alia, the *-in(n)-* infix discussed earlier, which, following the eighteenth-century ‘Najdi-ization’ of Bahrain, must have become a conspicuous marker of Baḥārna (Shī‘ī) speech. In Oman, on the other hand, this infix is and always has been a feature common to all Omani dialects, and therefore has no particular social colouring (or stigma) attached to it.

(*kubār as-sinn*), who are presumably descended from Baḥārna from Bahrain/eastern Saudi Arabia and migrated there at some point in the past, as they did to other parts of the Gulf (Kuwait, southern Iran); but /f/ < /t/ is not general in the main body of the UAE dialects, occurring in a few words only, and is not heard at all, as far as I know, in Oman.

<sup>51</sup> There are three B1 villages and one neighbourhood of Manāma which have /y/ as their normal reflex of OA /ǧ/, but these are in a tiny minority.

3. v5: the *ghawa*-syndrome

As already noted, this is a classic feature of the ‘bedouin’ dialects of the eastern Arab World, such as A1, and is absent from the B1 dialects, as it is from all other dialects of the ‘sedentary’ type.

## 4. v6, v7, and v8: 2nd-person pronouns, suffixed and independent

As discussed earlier, the A1 system was affected historically by the affrication of OA /k/ in front-vowel environments, especially in contiguity with /i/, which impacted the form of the 2fsng form only. In the B1 dialects, on the other hand, the affrication of OA /k/ was unconditioned, and so affected both the 2msng and the 2 com pl clitics, but not the 2fsng, which, as argued earlier, must have been ‘imported’ from South Arabia in the form *-(i)š* before this general affrication of /k/ occurred. At the time of my fieldwork in Bahrain, the B1 system survived intact only in the speech of elderly speakers in the villages. It had totally disappeared from the urban B speech of Manāma, the capital city. Here, the B dialect system had come to resemble that of the A dialects, with *-(i)k* for 2msng and *-kum* for 2 com pl, but still maintaining the *-(i)š* for 2fsng. Thirty years on, al-Qouz’s research showed that this process of loss had continued. In the speech of Manāma school-children aged 5–17 from the Baḥārna community, she showed that 2fsng *-(i)š* was being replaced by the A 2fsng form *-(i)č* (al-Qouz 2009: 180, 186) over the course of their education, the switch being virtually complete by the age of 17 (at least, in the public, non-domestic contexts in which she made her recordings). The same was true of another B shibboleth, the independent 2nd-person pronoun forms *intīn* ‘you (f)’ and *intūn* ‘you (pl)’,<sup>52</sup> which were also being replaced with the A forms *inti* and *intu* (al-Qouz 2009: 239).

5. v9: the *-n(n)-* infix on the suffixed ap

The dialect geography and history of the *-n(n)-* infix were outlined earlier. In Bahrain, it is my impression that the use of the *-(n(n)-* infix with suffixed active participles, obligatory in the Baḥārna dialects as I recorded them in the 1970s, is now becoming recessive in public speech contexts, just as other Baḥārna village variants have already become, and for the same reason: both are markers, in the Bahraini context, of the non-prestige dialect, and in today’s political climate a stigmatized one.

## 6. v10: the interrogative clitic

In the B1 dialects, a clitic *-ə* can be suffixed to any sentence element to raise a question about it. If the element ends in a vowel, the clitic is realized as *-yə* or *-hə*, e.g.

<sup>52</sup> These forms are rare in the Arabian peninsula, but where they do occur, they fit the same distributional pattern as the 2 fsng *-(i)š* and the *-in(n)-* infix, occurring in an arc around the east and south-east periphery of the Arabian peninsula. As well as in the Baḥārna dialects of Bahrain and eastern Saudi Arabia, similar forms have been noted for the Musandam Peninsula on the UAE-Oman border (Jayakar 1902: 252) and at various locations in south-western Saudi Arabia (Prochazka 1988c: 125) and the Yemeni Tihāma (Behnstedt 1985: 73, 76, 118, 124; Greenman 1979: 59–60).

- (43) *minhu?* *ǧāsīm-ə?*  
 who Jasim-q  
 'Who? Jasim?'
- (44) *awlād-iš* *əmšattatīn-ə?*  
 children-you.f split up-q  
 'Have your (f) children been split up (between different fathers)?'
- (45) *intīn bitt-i* *flāna-hə?*  
 you.f daughter-my so-and-so-q  
 'Are you my daughter called so-and-so?'
- (46) ... *lā taḥriḡ-kum* *ir-ramḡa-yə?*  
 lest it-burn-you.pl the-hot ground-q  
 '...lest the hot ground burn you(r feet)?'

Like the *-in(n)-* infix, this is also a saliently B1 feature, now seemingly also recessive.

#### 7. v11 and v12: s-stem verb morphology

v11: As already noted, the A1 dialect did not allow more than two short open syllables in succession, so that in all CvCvCv(C) forms, whether they arose as a result of verb inflection or as a result of suffixation by object/possessive pronouns, the A1 dialects typically deleted the first vowel. In the s-stem verb, this resulted in verb forms such as *ktibat* 'she wrote' (< *kitab-at*) and, in nominal morphology, forms like *wriḡa* 'a piece of paper, leaf' (*warag-a*). The B1 dialects had no such syllabic restrictions, and allowed CvCvCv(C) forms, so *katabat* (< *katab+at*) and *waraka* (< *warak-a*).

v12: In the A1 dialects, there are three vowel patterns of the stem in the strong verb, CiCaC-, CuCaC- or CaCaC-, depending on which consonants occupy the C1 and C2 positions in the stem. If C1 or C2 is a 'guttural' (/x, ǧ, ʕ, ḥ, h/), or if C2 is one of the continuants /l, r or n/, the stem is CaCaC-, e.g. *ḥamal-*, *xasar-*, *ǧasal-*, *ʕaraf-*, *gaʕad-*, *šaxar-*, *šaǧal-*, *taras-*, *šarab-*, *balaʕ-*, *kanas-*. If neither of these two conditions applies, the stem is either CiCaC- or CuCaC-. A labial consonant in C1 or C2 favours CuCaC- as long as the other consonant is an emphatic, or /g/ or /r/, or, in a few cases, /n/, e.g. *rubaṭ-*, *wuṣal-*, *wuḡaf-*, *ṭubaʕ-*, *muraḡ-*, *nubar-*, *guḡal-*, *buḡa-*. Otherwise, the stem is CiCaC-, which is probably the commonest vowel pattern, e.g. *kitab-*, *simaʕ-*, *kibar-*, *ḡibaḥ-*, *misak-*, *yibas-*, *sikat-*, *nigal-*, *rigad-*. The B1 dialect lacks these phonological constraints, and the vowelling system in the s-stem verb corresponds to that of OA, in which the stem vowel largely depended on the semantic class of the verb.

This appears to have been the original systemic distinction between the A1 and B1 dialects, but contact-induced change has blurred it. On v11, the urban A and B dialects both now show a variable shift, as similarly noted earlier in the section on A1/A2 contrasts, towards a 'neutral' CvCCvC form in the 3fsng (e.g. *kitbat* 'she wrote') and to forms such as *kitbu/ kitbo* in the 3 com pl, similar to the forms of the A2 dialect. On v12, the vowelling patterns of the A1 dialect seem to have been at least partially adopted by many urban B speakers, especially of the younger generation, but there is much free variation between forms

with stem vowel /i/, such as *kitabt* (or *ktabt*) and B forms with stem vowel /a/, such as *katabt*.<sup>53</sup>

### 5.2.2.3 Dialects B1 and B2/B3

The Bahārna B1 and the Omani B2 dialect speaker communities both consisted of village farming communities when the data for this study were gathered in the 1970s and 1980s. Though separated by 500 miles of mountain and desert, the similarities between these two dialects are very striking as well as unusual in the Arabic dialects as a whole, in particular the shared bundle of phonological features v1, v2, v3, and the morphological bundle v6, v9, and v10 in Table 5.2 (giving selected points of comparison). The main differences are two: first (v4), the Omani B2 (and B3) dialect retains the OA interdentalals (/t/, /d/, and /ð/) whereas the Bahraini B1 dialects have lost them (the B1 reflexes are /f, d, ð/); secondly, the Omani B2 (and B3) dialect retains gender distinctions in the plural persons of the verb and in plural pronouns, which have been lost in B1 and the other dialects of the northern Gulf.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the degree of similarity suggests a common ancestry, which, we argued earlier, is probably south-west Arabian. Over a period which cannot be determined with precision, but which probably began well before Islam and continued for centuries, the ancestors of today's B1 and B2 dialect speakers were brought by tribal migrations to the eastern and south-eastern Gulf and settled there (Wilkinson 1987: 73, 76–7) where they have remained ever since. The alternative scenario, that the linguistic similarities in their dialects could have arisen as a result of more recent contact, is improbable: until thirty years ago, many elderly Omani mountain villagers had not even visited their own capital city, Muscat, let alone been outside the country – I recorded many in the mid-1980s who had not travelled more than 10 kilometres from their homes in their entire lives, such was the isolation of inner Oman.

The B2 and B3 dialects are also very similar. The features on which they differ are phonological, v1–v3, in which B3 shows an alternative but still typologically 'sedentary' development of the OA system: OA /q/ is retained as a voiceless uvular stop, /k/ remains as a voiceless velar stop, and OA /ğ/ has developed into (or, more likely, was originally and remained) a voiced velar stop /g/. On this last point, the value of 'OA /ğ/', there is an ongoing debate as to whether the OA phoneme was actually a velar stop /g/ inherited from common Semitic \*g, which was then fronted and affricated to /ğ/ in many OA dialects, but not all, some Yemeni and Omani 'sedentary' dialects (like B3) being among those which retained an original /g/. The alternative explanation, that Yemeni/Omani /g/ is the result of the de-affrication and backing of an original

<sup>53</sup> The variation in these s-stem forms is complex; for a full account see Holes 2016: 184ff.

<sup>54</sup> These preservations make the Omani B2 and B3 dialects unusual, as both are normally thought of as typical features of the 'bedouin' type of dialect throughout Arabia and the rest of the eastern Arab World. However, a group of rural 'sedentary' dialects in central Palestine have also preserved both the interdentalals and gender distinctions in the plural of the verb and pronoun, as well as having the /k/ realization of OA /q/ and the /ɛ/ reflex of OA /k/ in all environments, exactly as in the Omani B2 dialects. Such exceptions show that the terms 'bedouin' and 'sedentary' as dialect classifiers are at best schematic and do not always correspond to the same set of dialect distinctions everywhere.

OA /ğ/ to /g/, is, in terms of general phonological theory, much less natural (see Woidich and Zack 2009 for a summary of the arguments in regard to the /g/ of Cairene Arabic). Be that as it may, it is possible that the B<sub>3</sub> system, still common in the dialects of south-western Arabia, was historically the ‘parent’ system, of which the B<sub>2</sub>/B<sub>1</sub> system was an offshoot at some later point, viz:

**TABLE 5.4** The development of OA  
/q/, /k/, /g/ in Gulf ‘sedentary’ dialects

OA	B <sub>3</sub>	B <sub>1</sub> /B <sub>2</sub>
/q/ →	/q/ →	/k/
/k/ →	/k/ →	/č/
/g/ →	/g/ →	/ğ/

In Table 5.4, the B<sub>3</sub> dialect simply continued the OA system. In the B<sub>1</sub>/B<sub>2</sub> dialects, whether they were offshoots of B<sub>3</sub> or separate developments of the OA system, /q/ was fronted to /k/, which triggered a second shift, the unconditional fronting and affrication of /k/ to /č/. Note that, whether we take the third phoneme of the OA trio to have been, as in the table, originally a velar stop /g/, or an alveolar affricate /ğ/, its development was unconnected to that of /q/ and /k/. This is shown by the fact that there are other B dialects which have a /q/, /k/, /ğ/ system (common in many rural areas of northern Oman), yet others which have a /k/, /č/, /g/ system (one Baḥārna dialect of Bahrain<sup>55</sup>) and yet others, on the border between ‘bedouin’ and ‘sedentary’ dialect areas which runs from Ibrā’ to al-Kāmil in south-east Oman, a distance of around 100 kilometres, which have a /q/, /k/, /y/ system (Holes 1989: 450–2). This /y/ reflex of ‘OA /g/’ (or was it /ğ/? ) is the norm, as we noted earlier, in all bedouin-descended Gulf dialects from Kuwait in the north to Oman in the south. Like the retention of the interdentals in the Omani B dialects, this further illustrates that the dialectologist’s ‘bedouin’–‘sedentary’ classification is approximate and schematic, rather than an exact reflection of what happened everywhere.

Let us look now at how the B<sub>3</sub> dialect is faring sociolinguistically. An inspection of Table 5.2 shows that the B<sub>3</sub> Omani dialect, that of the Capital Area, is also radically different from the A dialects, which, with minor local variations, are dominant in the rest of the Gulf. While the other Gulf States were developing on the proceeds of their new wealth in the decades after oil was discovered in the mid-1930s, Oman remained the odd man out, closed, isolated, and almost completely undeveloped. All that changed in 1970 with accession of Sultan Qaboos. Since then, and particularly since the 1980s, beginning with the founding of the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981, the Gulf States have been brought into an ever closer political and social embrace, and have even more recently enjoyed a greatly increased exposure to the electronic media output of their neighbours. These developments are now

<sup>55</sup> The dialect of the village of ‘Āli (see Holes 1983a: 14).

undoubtedly having linguistic consequences. We noted earlier the recession of the B1 dialect in Bahrain in favour of 'more prestigious' A dialect forms, especially among the younger generations. Something similar is happening in Oman, but with different motivations. Since the mid-1980s, a 'Gulf' (i.e. non-Omani) form of speech has been gaining traction in the Omani electronic media, notably in radio and TV discussion and Q-and-A programmes in which a relaxed, unscripted 'vox populi' style is the preferred medium. This linguistic fashion is being led, as is so often the case, by young Omani female presenters. It has attracted some negative publicity, not least because the B3 dialect, unlike the B1 dialect in Bahrain, is the dialect of the Capital Area, the seat of government, and all the social prestige and economic power that goes with it. It is an emblem, for many Omanis, of what makes them different from the rest of the Gulf, and its potential demise is a cause of publicly expressed resentment (see Holes 2011b: 134–5; 2016: 468–9).

### 5.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. An examination of the vocabulary of the modern Gulf Arabic dialects shows that they contain a substantial number of material culture items that are apparently of ancient Mesopotamian origin. Many of the words in this substrate, in the meanings they have in Gulf Arabic, are absent from the Arabic dialects of central Arabia and also from the Classical Arabic lexicon as recorded by the medieval lexicographers, but show up in cognate forms in one or more of the non-Arabic Semitic languages of ancient Mesopotamia. Lexical (and some structural) items which fit this pattern are more common in the Gulf B dialects than in the A, but are not confined to them. The most likely explanation of how these items got into Gulf Arabic is that they arrived either via a substrate or through prolonged contact with speakers of forms of Akkadian and/or Aramaic in antiquity.
2. Historically, three types of Arabic dialect existed in the Gulf region, each having a different geographical provenance: the A1 dialects, which originated in Najd and the desert hinterlands of the coast, and arrived on the Gulf littoral in the mid to late eighteenth century; the A2 dialects, indigenous to the Gulf coast and there well before the Najdi influx, but like them, typologically 'bedouin'; and the B dialects, all 'sedentary' in type, which probably originated in south-western Arabia and spread via ancient migrations to the east and south-east of the peninsula. Supporting evidence for the antiquity of the Gulf dialects is furnished by surviving pockets of Arabic speakers in the Oxus valley of Central Asia (in NE Iran, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan), which have been cut off from the Arabic-speaking 'heartlands' of the eastern Arab world since about AD 1000. In many basic features, structural and lexical, these Central Asian dialects bear a striking resemblance partly to the A and B1/B2 dialects of the modern Gulf and partly to the dialects of Iraq as they were before the Mongol devastations of 1258 changed that country's dialect geography (Blanc 1964: 168–71)—the resemblance is not to any one of these dialects, but to an amalgam of elements

from several of them (see Holes 2011a: 88–93 for details). This is consonant with the medieval Arab historians' accounts of the conquest of Central Asia in the eighth century, which states that tribesmen from Iraq and eastern/south-eastern Arabia were a major element in the tribally mixed army of invasion. The Arabic dialect pockets of NE Iran (Seeger 2002) in particular, look like an intertribal koine formed from the dialects of these Iraqi and east and south-east Arabian tribesmen.

3. For many centuries, there must have been contact between speakers of all three types of Gulf dialect, but for social reasons, chief among them sectarian affiliation, the main interface was between A<sub>1</sub> and A<sub>2</sub>, which have now largely coalesced. Until recently, by contrast (no more than three decades ago), the B dialect speakers lived in separate settlements from the A, pursued livelihoods different from theirs, and did not intermarry with them. Since that time, changes in employment patterns, increased urbanization, new 'mixed' towns, and the communications revolution have brought about increased contact in new contexts. This is resulting in both the gradual loss of B features and a 'homogenization' of the A dialects to the point that it is now reasonable to speak of the emergence of a pan-Gulf koine based on them.



# Judaeo-Arabic

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## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The term ‘Judaeo-Arabic’ refers to a type of Arabic that was used by Jews and was distinct in some way from the Arabic used by other religious communities. It is by no means a uniform linguistic entity and is used to refer to both written forms of Arabic and also spoken dialects.

The Arabic language was used by Jews in Arabia before the rise of Islam. Some of the pre-Islamic Arabic poets were Jewish, the most famous of whom was al-Samawʿal ibn ʿĀdiyāʾ. The surviving written works of such Jewish poets do not exhibit anything that distinguishes them from the equivalent works of their non-Jewish contemporaries, and so are generally not referred to as Judaeo-Arabic. It is assumed that the Jewish communities in Arabia spoke Arabic as their vernacular language. Although we do not have any direct evidence of the nature of this spoken language, some scholars claim that there are indirect indications that it differed from the vernacular of the non-Jews, mainly by virtue of the presence of Hebrew and Aramaic lexical elements, which were transferred, through cultural contact, to the non-Jewish population, and appeared in the Qurʾān and other early Arabic literature.

After the Islamic conquests in the seventh century AD, the Arabic language gradually spread throughout the Near East. It was initially restricted to the invading Arab armies, but soon began to be used by the local population. This applied not only to converts to Islam but also to Jews and Christians who maintained their religion and traditional communal life. The Arabicization took place most rapidly in the large urban centres, where the Arab armies had settled and established centres of administration. In the pre-Islamic period, the Jews of Iraq and Syria spoke Aramaic, whereas further west, they used Berber or Romance as their vernacular languages. These languages were largely replaced by Arabic. The Jewish communities in rural areas were much slower in adopting the Arabic language. Although the Jews of the urban centres in Iraq appear to have become Arabic-speaking by the eighth century AD, there is evidence that the Jews in the countryside continued to speak Aramaic at least until the tenth century. Some Jewish communities living in the isolated mountainous

areas of northern Iraq never fully adopted Arabic as a vernacular, and continued to speak Aramaic down to modern times. A similar pattern applied to the spread of Arabic elsewhere in the Islamic empire.

During the first three centuries of the Islamic period, the Jews in the Near East used the traditional Rabbinic languages of Hebrew and Aramaic as their written language, although many of the urban communities were no doubt using Arabic as their vernacular at this period. One factor that may explain the slowness of the Jews to use Arabic as a written literary language was that the main centres of Jewish learning, such as the academies of Sura and Pumbeditha, were situated in the Iraqi countryside, where Aramaic remained the spoken language for a longer period (Fenton 1990: 464). The earliest surviving records of Judaeo-Arabic are datable to the eighth or ninth century AD. They were written in Hebrew script, which became one of the most conspicuous distinctive features of written Judaeo-Arabic. Thereafter, Arabic in Hebrew script continued to be used by Jews in Arabic-speaking lands throughout the Middle Ages down to modern times. The term 'Judaeo-Arabic' is frequently used to refer to all such cases of Arabic written in Hebrew script. This is based on a descriptive criterion, namely its graphic representation, and also, by implication, one of communicative function, since anything written in Hebrew script would, one would assume, be addressed to a Jewish readership.

Judaeo-Arabic in this sense, i.e. any form of Arabic written in Hebrew script, is not a linguistically uniform phenomenon. It is generally categorized into three chronological periods, which correspond to three major phases in its linguistic development, viz. Early Judaeo-Arabic, Classical Judaeo-Arabic, and Late Judaeo-Arabic.

## 6.2 PERIODS OF WRITTEN JUDAEO-ARABIC

The term 'Early Judaeo-Arabic' is used to refer to Judaeo-Arabic that was written before the tenth century. This material has come to light only in the last few decades. It consists of private documents on papyrus and some manuscript fragments of literary texts. These texts are datable to at least the ninth century and some possibly earlier.

The period of 'Classical Judaeo-Arabic' began in the tenth century. During this period, Judaeo-Arabic was used in a very wide range of texts. Many of the traditional texts of Judaism were translated into Judaeo-Arabic, including first and foremost the Hebrew Bible, but also other texts, such as the Mishnah, Talmud, Midrashim, and liturgy. Many new genres of Arabic text were adopted by the Jews from the Muslim cultural environment and adapted to Judaism (Drory 1988). This reflected a close rapprochement between the Jews and Muslim culture in the High Middle Ages (approximately the tenth to the thirteenth centuries AD). The new genres of texts included works on biblical exegesis, grammar, systematically arranged handbooks of legal subjects, and works on theology and philosophy. Judaeo-Arabic was also used for a wide range of documentary material. Most letters were written in Judaeo-Arabic and also a large proportion of Jewish legal documents. Hebrew was still used as a learned language in letters by some Jewish intellectuals, such as the Geonim. It was also used by the leading Jewish poets in the Middle Ages, but many popular verses

and songs were composed by Jews in Judaeo-Arabic. During this period the Samaritans began to write Arabic in Samaritan script (Ben-Hayyim 1957: lxxiv–lxxviii).

In the Late Judaeo-Arabic period the range of texts written in Judaeo-Arabic became more restricted. Among the factors that brought this about was that the Jewish communities enjoyed less intellectual rapprochement with the Muslim environment. In many of the regions of the Near East the beginning of this period can be located in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, when Spanish and Portuguese Jewish refugees from the expulsions and their descendants came to be among the leading intellectuals in the Arabic-speaking Jewish communities. As a result Hebrew was used in these communities for the composition of many literary texts. Judaeo-Arabic became restricted largely to popular texts such as stories and songs or private letters. Another common type of Judaeo-Arabic text in this period was a literal translation of the Bible, and a few other traditional Jewish texts known as *šarḥ*. This was a word-by-word gloss which generally could not be understood independently of the original Hebrew source text. The medieval Judaeo-Arabic Bible translations ceased to be used in most Arabic-speaking Jewish communities and were supplanted by the *šarḥ*, the language of which was much closer to the local vernacular spoken dialect. It did, however, contain linguistic vestiges from the Classical Judaeo-Arabic translation tradition, particularly of the prestigious translation of Saʿadya Gaon. This hybrid multiple layering is identifiable in particular in the *šarḥ* tradition of North Africa (Bar-Asher 2001a; Chetrit 2014a: 211–12). The printing press gave an impetus to new genres of Late Judaeo-Arabic. In the nineteenth century, for example, Judaeo-Arabic newspapers were produced in several Arabic-speaking Jewish communities. Avishur (1986: 3) has proposed that the beginning of the Late Judaeo-Arabic period in Iraq should be located in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries after the devastations of the Mongol invasions. In the Jewish communities of Yemen, Classical Judaeo-Arabic texts continued to be copied and read down to modern times and the division between Classical and Late periods of Judaeo-Arabic is not so appropriate.

One of the main distinctive linguistic features of Early Judaeo-Arabic is the orthography with which the Arabic is represented. It is a phonetic spelling representing the way the writers pronounced the language based on the orthographic practices used for Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic rather than those of CLA in Arabic script. This is particularly noticeable in the use of vowel letters, e.g. the defective spelling of long /ā/ (סלם <SLM> = سلام *salām* ‘greeting’, עפיה <FYH> = عافية *‘āfiyah* ‘health’) and the plene spelling of short /i/ and /u/ (אלחיקמה <LHYKMH> = الحكمة *al-ḥikmah* ‘wisdom’; אילא <YL> = إلى *ilā* ‘to’; תהרוב <THRWB> = تهرّب *tahrub* ‘you flee’). The letters *ḏād* and *ḏāʾ*, which had no direct equivalent in the Hebrew consonantal inventory, were represented by the letter *daleṯ*, the nearest phonetic equivalent, e.g. יקבדוה <YQBDWH> = يقبضه *yaqbiḏuh* ‘He will receive it’, עדה <DH> = عظة *‘iḏāh* ‘admonition’. The *lām* of the definite article was not represented when it was assimilated to the following letter, e.g. אסלם <SLM> = السلام *al-salām* ‘the greeting’. *Tāʾ marbūṭa* was represented by *taw* when it was pronounced /t/ in a word in an annexation construction, e.g. עידת אלחיה <YDT LHYʾH> = عظة الحياة *‘iḏat al-ḥayāh* ‘the admonition of life’. Examples are from Blau 2002: 136–54. The phonetic spelling in the early texts reveals various features of vernacular Arabic pronunciation. The

reflections of *ʿimāla* in the texts are important for tracing the history of this phenomenon. Hopkins (2005) has shown that the orthography reflects an Umlaut type of *ʿimāla* such as is found in the modern *qaltu* dialects (Jastrow 1978), whereby *ā* is raised by a process of vowel harmony in the environment of a high vowel, e.g. גיהל <GYHL> *ġēhil* ‘ignorant’ (CLA *ġāhil*).

In Classical Judaeo-Arabic, which was used in most Arabic-speaking Jewish communities from the tenth to approximately the fifteenth centuries, the spelling that was used was made to correspond to the orthographic conventions of CLA. Long vowels were regularly represented by vowel letters, whereas short vowels were spelt defectively without vowel letters, e.g. סלאם <SLʾM> = سلام *salām* ‘greeting’, אלחכמה <ʾLHKMH> = الحكمة *al-ḥikmah* ‘wisdom’, תהרב <THRB> = تهرب *tahrub* ‘you flee’. Long /ā/ was generally spelt defectively in the small set of words where this was the norm in CLA orthography, e.g. דלך <DLK> = ذلك *dālīka* ‘that’. Final long /ā/ was represented by *yod* where CLA orthography had *ʿalif maqṣūra* spelt with *yāʾ*, e.g. אלי <ʾLY> = إلی *ʿilā* ‘to’. The *lām* of the definite article was regularly represented, including in places where it was assimilated to the following consonant, e.g. אלסלאם <ʾLSLʾM> = السلام *al-salām* [pronounced *assalām*] ‘the greeting’. *Tāʾ marbūʿa* was represented by *heh* in all contexts, including when pronounced /t/ in annexation constructions, e.g. מערפה אלברהאן <MʿRFH ʾLBRHʾN> = معرفة البرهان *maʿrifat al-burhān* ‘knowledge of the proof’. The Arabic letters *ḍād* and *ḍāʾ* were represented respectively by *ṣade* and *ṭet* with a superscript dot in imitation of the Arabic alphabet, e.g. יקבצה <YQBḌH> = يقبضه *yaqbiḍuh* ‘He will receive it’, עטה <ʿDH> = عظة *ʿiḍa* ‘admonition’. The Arabic alphabet was not, however, imitated where the sound existed in Hebrew. The Arabic letters *khāʾ* and *ḡayn*, for example, were represented by Hebrew *kaf* and *gimel*, often with diacritical marks (ֶ, ֵ), rather than *het* and *ʿayin* with diacritical marks. This is because the pronunciation of the fricative allophones of the Hebrew letters *kaf* and *gimel* corresponded to that of the Arabic letters in question.

In most forms of Late Judaeo-Arabic, which began to be used roughly after the fifteenth century AD, scribes abandoned a rigorous imitation of the orthography of Muslim CLA and, as in the Early Judaeo-Arabic period, employed many of the conventions of spelling that were used for Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic. Short /i/ and /u/ vowels were frequently represented with vowel letters, e.g. איבני <ʾYBNY> = ابني *ibni* ‘my son’, קולת <QWLT> = قلت *qult* ‘I said’. Where CLA orthography represented final long /ā/ with *yāʾ* or *ʿalif*, the late texts often used the Hebrew vowel letter *heh*, in conformity with Hebrew/Aramaic orthography, e.g. עלה <ʾLH> = على *ʿalī* ‘upon’, ארسلנה <ʾRSLNH> = ارسلنا *arsalna* ‘we sent’. Another feature of Rabbinic orthography that is found in Late Judaeo-Arabic texts is the representation of consonantal /y/ and /w/ in word-internal position by double *waw* and *yod* respectively to distinguish them from *matres lectionis*, e.g. בואלין <BWWʾLYŠ> (Modern Cairene Arabic *bawalīš*) ‘bills of lading’ (Rylands Geniza Collection L 192 (Khan 2013), line 15), בייאנהום <BYYʾNHWM> (Modern Cairene Arabic *bayanhum*) ‘their specification’ (T-S AS 209.274 (Khan 1992a), line 13).

Some of the orthographic conventions of CLA do, however, appear in Late Judaeo-Arabic. These are likely to be vestiges of Classical Judaeo-Arabic usage rather than direct imitations of Muslim CLA. Late Judaeo-Arabic is a diverse corpus of material

from different regions and the degree to which such features are found is not uniform across all texts. The following is the situation that is found in texts from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Egypt. The letter *ḏād* is generally represented by *ṣade* with an upper diacritic, e.g. יחַדֵּר <YHḌR> = يَحْضُر *yaḥḏur* ‘He attends’. The *lām* of the definite article is regularly represented, even when it is assimilated to the following consonant in pronunciation, e.g. אֶל נָאֵס <ʔL NʔS> = الناس *al-nās* (pronounced *annās*) ‘the people’, אֶל רַחֲמָאן <ʔL RHMʔN> = الرحمن *al-rahmān* (pronounced *arrahmān*) ‘the beneficent’. Examples are from Khan (1992a). In many of these texts long /ā/ is regularly written with the vowel letter *ʔaleph*, e.g. קָאָלוּ <QʔLW> = قالوا ‘They said’, קָאָעֵד <QʔYD> = قاعد ‘(He is) sitting’. The *ʔaleph* is written even in contexts where a long /ā/ is likely to have been shortened in the contemporary spoken language, as it is in the modern vernacular, e.g. זָאָלֶצָה <KʔLŠH> (Modern Cairene Arabic *xalša* = CLA *xālīša*) ‘it (f) is sold’ (Rylands Geniza Collection L 192 (Khan 2013), line 27), חֶסָאָבְכֶם <ḤSʔBKWM> (Modern Cairene Arabic *ḥisabkum* = CLA *ḥisābukum*) ‘your account’ (line 19). An *ʔaleph* representing long /ā/ is written also in contexts where CLA has defective orthography, e.g. דָּאָלֶךְ <DʔLK> (CLA ذاك, CJA דָּךְ <DLK>) ‘that’ (line 6). In some cases, however, the vowel letter *ʔaleph* is omitted where there is a shortening of the vowel in the vernacular in closed syllables, e.g. אָסְרָהָ <ʔSʔRHʔ> (*ʔasʔarhā* = CLA *ʔasʔāruhā*) ‘its prices’ (line 18) and in unstressed open syllables, e.g. בּוּבָאָת <BWBʔT> (*bawwabāt* = CLA *bawwābāt*) ‘doors’ (line 24), וָאֵל מַחְבִּיב <WʔL MḤBYB> (*wal-maḥabīb* = CLA *wal-maḥābīb*) ‘and the *maḥbūb* coins’ (margin 3). Conversely, the vowel letter *ʔaleph* is sometimes written to represent short /a/, e.g. בָּאָלֶךְ <BʔLD> (*balad*) ‘town’ (line 11). This is not a practice either of Classical Judaeo-Arabic orthography or of Rabbinic Hebrew orthography. It may have developed in the orthography of late Judaeo-Arabic by analogy with historical spellings with *mater lectionis* *ʔaleph* such as those described, where the vowel would have been pronounced as short /a/ in the spoken vernacular.

The use of Hebrew script was taken over from the Hebrew and Aramaic literary tradition of the Jews. The language was changed but the traditional script continued. The different degrees to which the orthography of Arabic was adopted reflects the different degrees of rapprochement between Jewish and Muslim literature and culture at the various periods. This rapprochement was at its greatest in the High Middle Ages (approximately the tenth to the thirteenth centuries). Indeed, at this period, certain circles of Jewish scholars belonging to the Karaite movement of Judaism wrote some of their Arabic works in Arabic script. One of the reasons for the use of Arabic rather than Hebrew script by the medieval Karaites seems to be that they did not feel themselves to be so rooted in the Rabbinic literary tradition as the orthodox Rabbanite Jews and were, consequently, more open to adopting literary and linguistic practices from the surrounding non-Jewish environment. Karaite manuscripts in Arabic script are, moreover, often written in a relatively pure form of CLA. These Karaite texts were, nevertheless, clearly addressed to a Jewish readership and their contents must be defined as Jewish. They generally include a number of technical Hebrew or Aramaic elements, usually in the form of citations from the Bible, generally also in Arabic script. The main feature that distinguishes them from Muslim CLA texts, therefore, is the Jewish subject matter. Although from the point

of view of linguistic form it is difficult to classify their language as 'Judaeo-Arabic', it is legitimate to designate them as 'Judaeo-Arabic' from the point of view of social and communicative function, in that they are addressed to Jews on Jewish subjects, with contents that are likely to be largely incomprehensible to non-Jews.

In addition to the distinction between linguistic criteria and the criterion of communicative function in the definition of written Judaeo-Arabic, we should also make a distinction between a text in general and individual manifestations of a text in manuscripts. This distinction is relevant both when applying criteria of linguistic form and criterion of communicative function. The application of criteria of linguistic form to identify the language of a written text as Judaeo-Arabic may apply to the text in general, in all its recorded forms in manuscripts. This would be legitimate where the manifestations of the texts in manuscripts are largely uniform. In many cases, however, it is necessary to apply the criteria to each manuscript individually. The Karaite texts that are found written in some manuscripts in Arabic script, for example, were often copied in other manuscripts in Hebrew script. It is, in fact, difficult to establish in which script they were originally written. In the Middle Ages the choice of script used in Karaite manuscripts seems to have been largely the reflection of individual preferences. One Karaite author, for example, before writing the manuscript of the final version of a work, felt obliged to send a letter to the man who commissioned the work asking whether he wished the text to be written in Arabic or Hebrew script (Khan 1993).

The distinction between text in general and individual manuscripts is also relevant when applying the criterion of communicative function in the definition of Judaeo-Arabic. In the majority of cases, when a text is defined as 'Judaeo-Arabic' with regard to its communicative function, this applies to the text in general, in all its attestations. In a few cases the definition is not so straightforward. This applies, for example, to a number of manuscripts which contain Arabic texts written by non-Jewish authors that have been transcribed into Hebrew script. These texts were clearly written originally for either a Muslim or a general readership, rather than one that was specifically Jewish. A wide range of texts were transcribed in this way, including even the Qur'ān. A similar phenomenon is found in documentary material, in that Jews used to write in Hebrew script drafts and personal copies of Arabic documents that were addressed to Muslim officials, although the final version of the document that was sent to the official was written in Arabic script (see, for example, the documents published by Stern 1969). In such cases the text in general cannot be defined as Judaeo-Arabic, based on the criteria of linguistic form or communicative function, but the manuscripts in Hebrew script could be identified as Judaeo-Arabic according to both of these criteria. Although the text in general was not designed for a Jewish readership, the manuscripts in Hebrew script were written specifically for Jews who felt more at home in that script. Conversely, some Arabic texts, that were written by Jews originally in Hebrew script for a Jewish readership, were occasionally copied into Arabic script for a Muslim readership. One example of this is a manuscript of Maimonides' *Guide For the Perplexed* that is written entirely in Arabic script (Atay 1974). Finally, we should mention the fact that some early European presses printed Muslim Arabic texts in Hebrew characters simply because an Arabic font was not available

(Fenton 1990: 462–3). It is doubtful whether these should be classified as Judaeo-Arabic from the point of view of either linguistic form or communicative function.

In addition to being determined by external influences, orthographic practices in Judaeo-Arabic were affected also by literary models and traditions internal to Judaeo-Arabic. In the Middle Ages the widespread adoption of Classical Judaeo-Arabic orthography appears to have been stimulated by Sa'adya Gaon's use of this type of orthography in his Arabic translation of the Pentateuch (Blau and Hopkins 1984). Late Judaeo-Arabic orthography, as remarked, carried over some vestiges from Classical Judaeo-Arabic. In Yemen the tradition of Classical Judaeo-Arabic remained robust in the later period, with the result that its orthography stayed largely unchanged down to modern times.

In addition to differences in orthography in these three periods, there were also differences in grammatical structure. The writers of the Judaeo-Arabic texts spoke Arabic dialects as their vernacular. The language of the texts, however, is not a direct representation of these dialects. At all periods the writers attempted to produce a literary form of language that was distinct from their vernacular. In the Middle Ages, in both Early and Classical Judaeo-Arabic texts, the standard that the writers aimed at was that of CLA, or at least the post-CLA that was the normal form of literary expression in the cultural environment in which they lived (Fischer 1972). In the Late Judaeo-Arabic texts the literary model was generally that of contemporary substandard genres of writing, which tended to differ from region to region. In all periods of Judaeo-Arabic, however, vernacular dialectal features appear in the texts. In the Middle Ages this came about since the writers fell short of their goal of conforming to their literary standard, producing a form of language that is generally referred to as Middle Arabic. In the later period the literary model itself was a substandard form that contained a high proportion of local dialectal elements, so the presence of dialectal elements in Late Judaeo-Arabic is far greater than in the medieval texts. On account of this extensive local dialectal component of Late Judaeo-Arabic, the language of the texts differs in the various regions in which it was written, e.g. North Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, whereas such regional differentiation is not so pronounced, or indeed is sometimes entirely absent, in the medieval texts. In the Late Judaeo-Arabic texts the local vernacular dialects usually form the base of the language to which are added a limited number of non-vernacular elements to raise the register above that of pure vernacular. In medieval Judaeo-Arabic, on the other hand, the base of the language, or at least the intended base, can be said to be CLA and deviations from this base occurred by interference from the spoken vernacular.

In the Middle Ages, the extent to which the language deviated from CLA varies from text to text. This continuum of the degree of vernacular admixture relative to the literary standard language has been termed by Hary (1992) 'multiglossia'. The same author sometimes used different degrees of vernacular elements according to this readership. One conditioning factor for this diversity is the genre of the text. This is seen, for example, in the writings of Maimonides (1135–1204), whose extant letters to private individuals tend to contain more vernacular elements than his literary works, which were intended for an educated readership. The diversity in the Judaeo-Arabic



written in the Classical Judaео-Arabic period also has a chronological correlation. A diachronic study of the Judaео-Arabic of Geniza letters by Wagner (2010), for example, has demonstrated that the deviations from CLA are greater in letters from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries than in letters from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Wagner's work shows that the shift to a more vernacular-based type of written language in Late Judaео-Arabic after the fifteenth century was anticipated to some extent in processes that are identifiable already in writing from the preceding two centuries. The region in which a text was written is a further factor. Arabic texts written by Jews in peripheral areas such as Yemen and the Maghreb tend to be more conservative of CLA elements at later periods (Wagner 2010). As remarked already, one should also take into account that the degree to which literary texts exhibit Middle Arabic features may vary in the course of scribal transmission, in that scribes may either introduce Middle Arabic elements or correct the language of a text to make it conform more closely to CLA. As a result, the linguistic profile of a single work sometimes differs among the manuscripts.

The standardized orthography of Classical Judaео-Arabic could be read with a variety of different vernacular vocalisms and so many of the regional dialectal differences of the writers were not manifested in the texts. This facilitated its use as a literary koine language across all Arabic-speaking Jewish communities.

Despite the standardizing tendencies of the orthography, some dialectal phonetic processes are occasionally exhibited by the spelling of words in Classical Judaео-Arabic texts. These relate mainly to changes in syllable structure and the shortening of long vowels. A prosthetic <sup>ʔ</sup>*aleph*, for example, indicates the elision of a short vowel in the following syllable, as in אדרהם <<sup>ʔ</sup>DR<sup>ʔ</sup>HM> = دراهم 'dirhams' and the spelling of the s-stem of the verb patterns V and VI, אתפעל <<sup>ʔ</sup>TF<sup>ʔ</sup>L> and אתפעל <<sup>ʔ</sup>TF<sup>ʔ</sup>L>, respectively. The shortening of a long vowel in an unstressed syllable is reflected by the occasional omission of a vowel letter, as in אלדנניר <<sup>ʔ</sup>LDNNYR> (*al-dananîr*, i.e. *ā* > *a*) = الدنانير 'dinars', אלגוואר <<sup>ʔ</sup>LGWW<sup>ʔ</sup>R> (*al-ġawārî*, i.e. *î* > *i*) = الجواری 'maid servants' (Blau 1999: 70ff.). Some dialectal features relating to the pronunciation of the emphatic consonants are indicated by the spelling of the manuscripts, as in אלכצארה <<sup>ʔ</sup>LKS<sup>ʔ</sup>RH> (*al-xaṣāra*) = الخسارة 'the loss', which reflects the emphatic pronunciation of *rāʔ* and the spread of emphasis (*tafxîm*) (Blau 1999: 77). A variety of dialectal features of morphology and syntax are revealed by the texts, such as the levelling of the case distinctions of sound masculine plural and dual endings and the use of the oblique form as the common form (*-în*, *-ēn*), the diminishing use of the internal passive, the extension of the use of the particle *mā* to negate future and subordinate clauses, and its replacement as an interrogative pronoun by the constructions <sup>ʔ</sup>*ayy šay*, <sup>ʔ</sup>*ēš*, <sup>ʔ</sup>*aš* (Blau 1999: 105ff.).

The features described in the preceding paragraph are common to a large number of dialects, whether spoken by Muslims, Christians, or Jews, and are not distinctive of any particular region. Occasionally, however, the texts contain features that are distinctive of the regional dialect of the writer. Some texts of North African origin, for example, contain the 1st-person p-stem forms *niqtîl* (1sng)—*niqtîlû* (1pl); texts of Iraqi origin sometimes use 3pl and 2pl p-stem verb forms with the ending *-ûn* in all contexts, irrespective of mood. A few texts written in Egypt attest to the typically



Egyptian demonstrative pronouns *dā* (m), *dī* (f), and *dōl* (com pl), which are often placed after the noun (Blau 1999: 60ff.).

There appears to have been a particular resistance to a few specific dialectal features. The medieval texts, for example, regularly use the literary form of the relative pronoun *ʔallaḏī* in preference to the vernacular form *ʔilli*, which is used in the contemporary dialects in the regions in question and is likely to have existed in medieval ancestors of these dialects.

The dialectal features that have just been described correspond directly to features that are found in the modern spoken Arabic dialects. Although attested in medieval texts they generally do not appear to represent forms that are at an earlier stage of diachronic development from their counterparts in the modern dialects. The Judaeo-Arabic texts attest to the existence of spoken dialects in the Middle Ages that are remarkably similar to the modern dialects. One would expect that the spoken dialects would have changed over the course of a thousand years and this may well have been the case in a number of details. It is not easy, however, to establish with certainty the details of such historical development from the medieval texts. The main reason for this is that not all deviations from CLA should be identified as the reflection of genuine dialectal features. In some cases these deviations are pseudo-literary features, which arise when the writer attempts to avoid a dialectal feature but produces a form that does not exist either in his spoken dialect or in the CLA literary language. Blau classifies these into hypercorrections and hypo-corrections. A hypercorrection is an instance of the writer's/speaker's using a CLA form in place of a vernacular form in a context where it is not required. Classical Arabic, for example, distinguishes between moods in the pl p-stem (*yaktubūna* indicative versus *yaktubū* subjunctive/jussive), whereas these have been levelled in vernaculars, in most cases to *yaktubū* for all contexts. If a writer/speaker uses the Classical *-ūna* inflection in a context where even in CLA *-ū* is required, a hypercorrect form results, e.g. *lam yaktubūna* 'they did not write' (CLA *lam yaktubū*). A hypo-correction is an instance of the writer's/speaker's attempting to correct a vernacular form but falling short and producing a hybrid form that is not correct in either CLA or the vernacular. Blau (1999: 29) cites the example of the form באקין <BʔQYWN> *bāqiyūn* 'remaining (m pl)' which is a hypo-correction of the vernacular form *bāqiyīn*. The form *bāqiyūn* contains the CLA nominative nominal ending *-ūn* in place of the vernacular ending *-īn*, which has been levelled in all syntactic contexts. The true CLA form, however, would have been *bāqūn*, with elision of the *yāʔ*, so the form *bāqiyūn* is a hybrid that is only partially correct. Such hypo-corrections may have a syntactic dimension, e.g. the dialectal relative pronoun *ʔilli* is generally replaced by the literary form *ʔallaḏī*, but in many texts *ʔallaḏī* is used as an invariable form in all syntactic contexts, thus retaining the syntactic behaviour of the dialect form. Both of these types of phenomena have arisen by the process of substituting a vernacular morpheme with a CLA morpheme but retaining the syntactic distribution (hypercorrection) or morphological base (hypo-correction) of the vernacular. A lexical restriction is generally operative in this process, in that classicizing morphology tends to be avoided in lexical items that are characteristic of the vernacular (Holes 2008a: 210; Mejdell 2008: 362). Such pseudo-literary features can be regarded as forms of literal 'translation' of dialect

into CLA (Lentin 1997: 296). It is, indeed, significant to note that similar phenomena appear in literal Arabic translations from another language. In early Judaео-Arabic Bible translations, for example, the invariable Hebrew relative particle *ʔāšer* is translated by the masculine singular form *ʔallaḏī* irrespective of the syntactic context. This is analogous to the levelled distribution of this particle in many Middle Arabic texts by means of a direct substitution of the invariable dialect form of the particle. In such Bible translations the compound Hebrew conjunction *ka-ʔāšer* ‘when’ is translated morpheme by morpheme *ka-llaḏī*, which is a hybrid form that is nonexistent in CLA (Vollandt 2014). Some lexical features of literal translations, in fact, came to be used productively in freely composed Middle Arabic texts (Blau 2008). In general, therefore, it is difficult to distinguish between, on the one hand, a genuine dialectal form that is at an earlier stage of diachronic development than the corresponding form in the modern dialects and, on the other hand, forms that are pseudo-literary phenomena.

As has been remarked, the degree of vernacular interference in the language of Classical Judaео-Arabic texts is disguised somewhat by the orthography of the texts, since it imitates the spelling practices of CLA and so did not in principle indicate deviations from CLA relating to vowels and syllable structure. Several extant manuscripts datable to the medieval period that are supplied with Hebrew vocalization signs reveal numerous dialectal features that would not be apparent in unvocalized texts (Khan 2010). The vocalized texts are valuable in demonstrating the gap between orthography and pronunciation of medieval Judaео-Arabic texts. In some cases the dialectal pronunciation conflicts with the orthography. This applies, for example, to the 3msng pronominal suffix, which is vocalized with its dialectal form *-u* in all contexts, although it is normally spelt with *heh* in imitation of CLA, e.g. *וְאַחֲרֵי מוֹתוֹ* *u-baʿad mawtu* ‘and after his death’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 14v = CLA *wa-baʿda mawtihi*), *מֵעִי* *maʿu* ‘with him’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 15r = CLA *maʿahu*). In many cases the orthography is ambiguous with regard to the phonological form and could in principle be read with that of CLA or with a phonological form that is characteristic of modern Arabic dialects. The vocalization signs indeed reflect numerous features characteristic of the dialects. Most vocalized texts, for example, reflect a reading without the final short vowels of CLA, e.g. *מִנְהָּ* *mā ʔaʿdam wa-ʔakbar wa-ʔaḡall minhā* ‘what is mightier, greater and more majestic than them’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 14r = CLA *mā ʔaʿdamu wa-ʔakbaru wa-ʔaḡallu minhā*). The pronominal suffixes have dialectal forms, which are invariable for case. In addition to the 3msng suffix *-u*, which has been discussed, note also *מִן מִדְּחַק* *min madḥak* ‘of your praise’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 12v = CLA *min madḥika*), *מִן יָדָהֶם* *min yadhūm* ‘from their hand’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 12v = CLA *min yadihim*). There are numerous reflections of the raising of *a* vowels by the process of *ʔimāla*. This is found with long */ā/*, e.g. *עַל עֲבָדֶיךָ* *alē ʔibēdak* ‘on your servants’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 16v = CLA *alā ʔibādika*), *אֲדֻנְיָ* *addunyē* ‘the world’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 15r = CLA *addunyā*), and often also with short */a/*, e.g. *וְלֹא* *wa-lem* ‘and not’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 22v = CLA *wa-lam*). It is especially common with the vowel of *tāʔ marbūṭa* in word final position, which is prone to raising by *ʔimāla* in various Arabic dialects, e.g. *אֲחִירָה* *ʔaʔaxire* ‘final’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 12v = CLA *aʔaxira*), *אֲחִיקְמִי* *ʔalḥikmi* ‘wisdom’ (T-S Ar. 53.12, fol. 1r = CLA *alḥikma*). The vocalization also reflects the interpretation

of a form as having dialectal morphology where the orthography is ambiguous between the dialectal and the CLA forms. This applies, for example, to the reading of a CLA pattern IV verb as a pattern I, as in *וְתַחֲסִין לָנָא wataḥsin lanā* ‘and you do good to us’ (T-S Ar. 8.3, fol. 14r = CLA *watuḥsinu lanā*).

It is important to note that the vocalization of these texts does not systematically reflect a purely dialectal form of Arabic. It is particularly significant that most texts, including those with a high degree of dialectal features, exhibit pseudo-Classical features in the reading reflected by the vocalization. A recurrent feature, for example, is the retention of a vowel in an initial syllable with *hamzatu al-waṣl* after a word ending in a vowel. This vowel is elided not only in dialectal Arabic but also in the standard reading of CLA. The retention of the vowel is attested, for example, in the definite article, e.g. *פִּי אֱלִיכְמָה fi ʿalḥikmatī* ‘in wisdom’ (T-S Ar. 53.12 1v = CLA *fi lḥikmatī*), *וְעַל הַדֵּי אֵלֶּא מִוּר faʿalē hēdī ʿalʿumūr* ‘and on these matters’ (T-S Ar. 8.3 fol. 14r = CLA *faʿalā haḍīhi ʿumūri*). This reflects the treatment of the *hamza* in the reading tradition as *hamzatu al-qaṭʿ* rather than *hamzatu l-waṣl*, i.e. the syllable is not treated as prosthetic. Another phenomenon that may be a pseudo-classical feature is the occurrence of an /a/ vowel in a number of contexts where CLA has an /i/, *אֲנָמָה ʿannamā* ‘only’ (T-S Ar. 8.3 fol. 16v = CLA *ʿinnamā*), *קֶד אֲנִכְסָר קֶלְבִּי qad ʿankasar qalbī* ‘my heart has been broken’ (T-S Ar. 8.3 fol. 16v = CLA *qad inkasara qalbī*). The occurrence of an /a/ vowel in the prefix of the pattern VII verb is not totally unattested in dialectal Arabic. It occurs, for example, in medieval Andalusī Arabic (Corriente 1977: 104) and in some Egyptian dialects (see Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume).<sup>1</sup> It is possible, however, that the scribe is aware that CLA has /a/ in many situations where vernacular dialects have /i/ and in his attempt to give the language an appearance of CLA substitutes /a/ for /i/ by hypercorrection even where /i/ is the norm in CLA.

The conclusion that emerges is that the vocalized Judaeo-Arabic manuscripts from the Middle Ages reflect a far more vernacular reading of a written text than is found in the reading of CLA as preserved in the canonical reading traditions of the Qurʾān. Some features of reading that deviate from CLA, however, such as the replacement of *hamzatu l-waṣl* by *hamzatu l-qaṭʿ*, do not have obvious correlations with vernacular dialects. It is possible that a feature such as this is not a pseudo-correction that arose in the Middle Ages as a result of an imperfect knowledge of the CLA standard, but rather is a vestige of earlier pre-Classical standards of reading Arabic. This profile of non-CLA reading is not unique to Judaeo-Arabic but has close parallels with medieval Christian traditions of reading Arabic that are reflected by Arabic texts transcribed into Greek and Coptic (Khan 2017).

Many of the remarks made regarding the dialectal elements in the medieval texts apply also to the language of Late Judaeo-Arabic texts. These texts have a much more extensive dialectal base and clearly reflect the regional dialect of the writer. The

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Clive Holes for drawing my attention to these occurrences.

predominantly phonetic nature of the orthography, moreover, reflects many details of dialectal vowelling. The use of these texts as a source for the study of the diachronic development of the spoken regional dialects is, however, problematic. Forms and constructions differing from what is found in the corresponding modern dialect are often archaisms or pseudo-literary features. This can be illustrated by examining briefly the syntax of the demonstrative pronouns in Judaео-Arabic texts from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Egypt that have been preserved in the Geniza. These texts generally use the typically Egyptian forms of the demonstrative *dā, dī, dōl*, but they are regularly placed before the noun, rather than after the noun as in the modern Egyptian dialects. In the modern dialects the demonstrative occurs before the noun in a few fossilized expressions, e.g. *dilwaʔti* ‘now’, *ya delxēba* ‘What a pity!’, which may suggest that the Judaео-Arabic texts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries preserve an earlier stage in the development of the syntax in the dialect. In fact the placement of the Egyptian demonstratives after the noun is attested already in medieval Judaео-Arabic texts. Their occurrence before the noun in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts is a pseudo-literary feature. Classical Arabic syntax is used with dialectal morphological forms of the pronouns. This phenomenon is found in several dialectal literary texts that have been preserved from Mameluke and Ottoman Egypt. It is likely to have entered Late Egyptian Judaео-Arabic texts from this dialectal literature.

As has been remarked, the orthography of Late Judaео-Arabic is generally more phonetic than that of Classical Judaео-Arabic, but nevertheless contains some vestiges of the Classical Judaео-Arabic practices. Manuscripts of Late Judaео-Arabic with vocalization reflect many vernacular features in the reading of the texts that are not reflected by the orthography (Khan 2010). Some examples are cited here from the Geniza manuscript T-S Ar. 54.63, which contains a vocalized version of the folktale *qīṣṣat Ḥanna* ‘The tale of Ḥanna’. A short high vowel, represented by *šere, segol*, or *hireq*, occurs in many contexts where CLA has /a/, e.g. *אֶל תְּאֵלֶת* *ʔeltālet* ‘the third one’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 2r = CLA *altālīt*), *יִבְכִּי* *yibkī* ‘he is weeping’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 1v = CLA *yabkī*), *נִמּוּת* *nemūt* ‘we shall die’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 3r = CLA *namūt*), *לָהֶם* *lehom* ‘to them’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 5v = CLA *lahum*). The vocalization has a high front vowel in the prefixes of derived verbal forms where CLA has /u/, e.g. *יַאֲנֵס* *yeʔānes* ‘treats gently’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 2r = CLA *yuʔānis*), *מִיֶּכְאֵל* *mixālef* ‘opposes’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 2v = CLA *muxālif*). The syllabification is in some cases dialectal rather than the type found in CLA, e.g. *וְתִתְחַסֵּר* *ʔutethassar* ‘and she is distressed’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 3r = CLA *tataḥassaru*), *מִתְוַאֲגֵעַ* *metwaḡḡe* ‘suffering pain’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 3v = CLA *mutawaḡḡiʕu*). The pronominal suffixes have dialectal forms, e.g. the invariable 2msng suffix *-ak*: *כִּי בְלִאֲמַךְ* *fī kalāmak* ‘in your speech’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 1v = CLA *fī kalāmika*). Some forms that have an orthography that appears to be CLA and cannot be read as dialectal nevertheless have a vocalization that reflects a pronunciation deviating from that of CLA, e.g. *אֵלֶּי* *ʔillādī* ‘which’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 1v = CLA *allaḏī*, Modern Egyptian Arabic *illi*). In contexts where CLA reading and vernacular speech has *hamzatu l-waṣl* the

vocalization reflects a reading with *hamzatu l-qaf*, e.g. הָדָא אֵל כַּאֲפֵר *hada el kafer* ‘this disbeliever’ (Ar. 54.63, fol. 1v = CLA *hāda lkāfir*). This is a feature of non-standard reading that was continued from the Middle Ages.

Some genres of Late Judaeo-Arabic literature have been transmitted down to modern times orally. This applies, for example, to the *šarḥ* literature of the North African communities and poetry and folk literature in Yemen. The language of such orally transmitted texts is free of the disguise of orthographic practices. In Yemen it also had a more dialectal base than the contemporary written Judaeo-Arabic. It is still, however, problematic as a source for reconstructing earlier phases of the dialects owing to the presence of literary or pseudo-literary constructions or, in the case of the *šarḥ*, the imitation of the syntax of another language (Bar-Asher 2001a). Finally, it should be noted that some Late Judaeo-Arabic texts were direct copies, in Hebrew script, of Muslim dialectal literature and so cannot be used as a source for the study of the history of Jewish dialects. Such texts, for example, were produced and distributed in printed form in Tunisia during the nineteenth century (Chetrit 1993).

Another feature of written Judaeo-Arabic of all periods is the presence of Hebrew and Aramaic words in the language. These are mainly in the field of Rabbinic law and religious tradition. They are often adapted to the morphological structure of Arabic (Blau 1999: 134ff.; 2013). Hebrew verbs are given Arabic verbal inflection, the derived Hebrew stems being assimilated to the corresponding Arabic stems, e.g. the *hitpaʿel* verb הִתְאַבֵּל <HTʔBL> *hitʔabbel* ‘to mourn’ is adapted as an Arabic pattern V verb תִּאבַּל <TʔBL> *taʔabbala* and the *niṣʿal* verb נִדְּחָה <NDḤH> *nidḥa* ‘to be thrust’ is adapted as an Arabic pattern VII verb אִנְדְּחִי <ʔNDḤY> *ʔindahā*. Arabic verbal inflectional affixes may be attached to a Hebrew verb, e.g. נִחוּשָׁא <NḤWŠWʔ> *naḥūšū* ‘we fear’ (= Hebrew חוּשׁ <ḤWŠ> + Maghrebi Arabic 1pl inflectional morpheme *n...u*). A Hebrew word may be adapted to the morphosyntax of Arabic, as in constructions such as לֹם יִפְתֹּר <LM YFTWR> *lam yiftor* ‘he did not exempt’, in which the Hebrew word פָּטַר <PṬR> *paṭar* has the Arabic p-stem verb form *yafʿal* following the Arabic negative particle *lam*. Hebrew nouns are given Arabic sound plural suffixes, e.g. שְׂטָרָא <ŠṬʔRʔT> *šṭārāt* ‘writs’, or broken plurals, e.g. פְּסוּק <PSWQ> *pāsūq*—pl פּוֹאסִיק <PWʔSYQ> *pawāsīq* ‘verse’, sng סְדוּר <SDWR> *siddūr*—pl סְדָדִיר <SDʔDYR> *sadādīr* ‘prayer book’. There is occasionally some phonological adaptation. A particularly interesting phenomenon is the conversion of Hebrew *šin* into Arabic *sīn*, e.g. פְּרָשָׁה <PRŠH> *pārāšā* ‘weekly Scripture lesson’ > פְּרָסָה <PRʔSH>, שׁוֹפָר <ŠWFR> *šōpār* ‘horn’ > סַפּוֹר <SʔFWR>. This probably arose because of the equation of Hebrew *šin* with Arabic *sīn* in cognate words such as Hebrew שַׁבָּת <ŠBT> *šabbāt* = Arabic سَبْت *sabt*. There are a few cases of Hebrew and Aramaic influence on the syntax of medieval Judaeo-Arabic, e.g. the use of an anticipatory object suffix preceding a direct object nominal introduced by the preposition *li-*, e.g. סְמָא לִישְׂרָאֵל <SMʔH LYSRʔL BNY BKWRY> *sammāh li-yisraʿel bnī bxōrī* ‘He called Israel “my firstborn son”’ (Blau 1999: 82). This is a feature of a number of modern dialects, e.g. those of Baghdad (Blanc 1964: 128ff.) and also the Levant, which is thought by some to reflect the influence of an Aramaic substrate (see Lentin, Procházka, this volume).

### 6.3 SPOKEN JUDAEO-ARABIC DIALECTS

We have been concerned so far almost exclusively with Judaeo-Arabic in its written form. The term 'Judaeo-Arabic', however, is also used to refer to the spoken vernaculars of Jewish communities in the Arabic-speaking world. Most of these have now left their original places of residence and many have settled in the State of Israel. There are still, however, remnants of Arabic-speaking Jewish communities in some parts of the Arab world, especially in North Africa (Heath 2002).

The spoken Judaeo-Arabic dialects originated in the Arabic that was adopted by Jewish communities in various regions of the Middle East and North Africa after the Arab conquests. Most of these dialects now differ in some way from the dialects spoken by their Muslim neighbours and also, in certain regions, from those spoken by neighbouring Christian communities. There is a linguistic justification, therefore, for designating such dialects as Judaeo-Arabic. They are far more diverse in their structure than the various literary forms of Judaeo-Arabic. Even Late Judaeo-Arabic, with its several regional variations, tended to reflect the dialect of the major Jewish community of the region and so function as a regional koine.

The Jewish communities were generally urban-based and adopted the Arabic speech of the Muslims who settled in the various towns throughout the Middle East. In a few cases the Arabic-speaking Jews were agriculturalists down to modern times, for example, the Jewish community of Sendor in northern Iraq (Jastrow 1991a; 1993). The differences between the Jewish and non-Jewish dialects developed because of the different historical circumstances that were experienced by the Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours. The Jewish dialects do not have a common origin.

The degrees of difference between the Jewish dialects and those of their non-Jewish neighbours varied from region to region. The greatest differences are found where the Jewish dialect was the continuation of an old 'sedentary' dialect, whereas the Muslim population had adopted a 'bedouin' type of speech. The best-studied case of this was in Baghdad and southern Iraq (Blanc 1964). Similar cleavages between a Jewish urban dialect and a Muslim 'bedouin' dialect existed in some North African cities such as Benghazi, Tripoli (Yoda 2005), Oran and some smaller towns in the region of Algiers (Cohen 1912). Differences were found between the speech of Jews and that of non-Jews also in towns where the speech of the whole population belonged to the 'sedentary' type. Considerable structural differences existed, for example, between the pre-Hilālī 'sedentary' dialects of Jews and Muslims in some North African cities such as Algiers, Fez, and Tlemcen. The Christians of Baghdad speak a 'sedentary' type of dialect that exhibits numerous differences from the Jewish dialect (Abu-Haidar 1991; Blanc 1964). Until the middle of the twentieth century, therefore, Baghdad had three distinct communal dialects, spoken by the Muslims, Jews, and Christians. In other regions the differences between 'sedentary' Jewish and adjacent non-Jewish dialects were of a lesser degree. As far as can be established in the present state of research, this applied, for example, to the dialects spoken by the Jewish communities of northern Iraq (Jastrow 1990a), south-eastern Turkey (Arnold 1998; 2007; Jastrow 1978), Syria (Nevo 1991), Jerusalem (Piamenta 2000), the



Galilee (Geva-Kleinberger 2004; 2005; 2009), Egypt (Blanc 1974; Rosenbaum 2002a; 2008) and the rural areas of Yemen (in the cities of Yemen, in particular Ṣanʿāʾ, there were considerable differences (Kara 1986: 123; Aharoni 1994: 174–5; Shachmon 2007)). In some of these dialects the divergence consisted of little more than the incorporation of Hebrew vocabulary in the speech of the Jews and suprasegmental phenomena such as intonation patterns, as was the case in the old city of Jerusalem. In others there were also a few minor morphological differences. Finally it should be noted that according to reports from the first half of the twentieth century, certain members of the Jewish communities, for the sake of social prestige, made conscious attempts to avoid distinctive features of their Jewish dialects in their speech and replaced them with features of the adjacent Muslim dialect.

The conspicuous cleavages between Jewish and non-Jewish dialects have in most cases come about via the different migration histories of the communities, compounded by social distance. In the case of towns where the Muslims speak a 'bedouin'-type of dialect, the Jews are typically an old component of the population who resisted the linguistic influence of Muslim nomadic elements who settled in the town. This was the situation, for example, in Baghdad in Iraq (Blanc 1964) and in various towns in North Africa (Heath 1991; 2002; Yoda 2005; Cohen 1912). In the case of some of the towns in the region of Iraqi Kurdistan the Muslim population ceased to speak Arabic altogether. In the town of Arbīl, for example, only the Jewish community continued to speak Arabic down to modern times, whereas the Muslims are now Kurdish- or Turkoman-speaking. In Kirkuk the Arabic-speaking Jewish community resided with predominantly Turkoman-speaking Muslim neighbours.

Some differences between Jewish and non-Jewish 'sedentary' dialects have arisen through the immigration of Jews from one town to another town with an existing Arabic-speaking Muslim population. This appears to have been the case, for example, with the Jewish communities of the Tunisian towns, which at some point in history migrated from a centre in Qayrawān. Jewish immigrants in some cases joined an existing Jewish population, which may have had an influence on the speech of the Jews of the town. Migrations of large numbers of Jews from North Africa into Egypt from the Middle Ages onwards have resulted in the presence of certain Maghrebi features in the dialect of the Egyptian Jews, though some peculiarities of the Jewish Cairene dialect may be conservative retentions of features that were present in Muslim speech at an earlier period. In North Africa itself the Jewish communities received successive waves of Jewish refugees from Spain. Those fleeing from the Almohads in the twelfth century would have been Arabic-speaking, though later waves of immigrations in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries from Christian Spain would have spoken Spanish and some features of the modern Jewish dialects could have arisen owing to a Spanish substrate (see Aguadé, this volume). The Jewish community in Sudan consisted of a mixture of migrants speaking various Jewish dialects who settled in the country at different periods. This resulted in the existence in the twentieth century of two distinct Jewish dialects. The dialect of the earlier settlers was closer to the Muslim Sudanese dialect than that of the later layer of Jewish migrants, which was a koine based on the Egyptian dialect of Alexandria (Geva-Kleinberger 2002a; 2002b).

In some cases different external social relationships resulted in cleavages between Jewish and Muslim dialects in a particular region. The dialect of the Jews of Iskanderun and Antakya in south-eastern Turkey, for example, acquired many features of the dialects of Aleppo and Damascus because of the close social contacts, whereas the Muslims of Iskanderun and Antakya retained the original local dialect to a greater extent (Arnold 1998; 2007).

Although the majority of the Arabic-speaking Jewish communities shifted to Arabic in the Middle Ages, some communities began speaking Arabic only in relatively recent times. This applied, for example, to isolated communities in the Atlas Mountains, who were Berber-speaking until the beginning of the twentieth century and shifted to Arabic after communication with Arabic-speaking communities was facilitated by the building of roads. For some of the communities of northern Morocco who spoke Judaeo-Spanish (e.g. Tetuan, Tangier, Larache, Chauen, and Arsila), Arabic was only a second language, spoken predominantly by men (Chetrit 2014a: 203).

Some Jewish Arabic dialects are, or were until recently, spoken outside the Middle East by migrants. This applies, for example, to forms of Baghdadi Jewish Arabic spoken by Jewish migrants in India and trading posts in East Asia (Geva-Kleinberger 2012; 2013a).

An illustration of structural differences between a Jewish 'sedentary' dialect and a Muslim 'bedouin'-type dialect can be given by adducing a few examples from the dialects of Baghdad. Following Blanc (1964), the Jewish dialect of Baghdad is said to belong to the *qəltu* group of dialects. These are the old 'sedentary' dialects of the Mesopotamian region. The shibboleth for this group, *qəltu* 'I said', contains two conspicuous features that distinguish it from the 'bedouin' dialects, namely the voiceless uvular pronunciation of the *qāf* and the *-tu* inflection of the 1sng of the s-stem verb. The 'bedouin' dialects of southern Iraq, including that of the Muslims of Baghdad, on the other hand, belong to the *gilit* group, in which OA *qāf* is pronounced as *g* and the 1sng inflection of the s-stem verb is *-it*. Some other phonological differences between the Jewish (J) and Muslim (M) dialects of Baghdad are: OA *kāf*: /k/ (J) versus /č/ (M, in some lexical items); OA *rāʔ*: /ğ/ [velar fricative] (J) versus /r/ [apical trill] (M); *ʔimāla* of OA long *ā* (J, in most cases conditioned by the presence of an adjacent /i/ or /i/ vowel in OA, e.g. *klib* 'dogs') versus lack of any *ʔimāla* in M (*člāb*). There are differences in the verbal inflectional morphology of the dialects, the Jewish one being, on the whole, more conservative, e.g. the subject inflection of the strong verb in the s-stem: (J) 1sng *-tu*, 3fsng *-ət*, 2 com pl *-təm*, 3 com pl *-u* versus (M) 1sng *-t*, 3fsng *-at*, 2 com pl *-tu*, 3 com pl *-aw*. The 3msng possessive suffix is: *-u* (J), *-a* (M). There is also a variety of lexical differences between the two dialects. The other Jewish dialects of Iraq and south-eastern Turkey, all of which belong clearly to the 'sedentary' *qəltu* group, share some of these distinctive features of the Jewish dialect of Baghdad, the closest being the Jewish dialects belonging to what Jastrow (1990a) calls the southern Kurdistan group (from Kirkuk to Khānaqīn). A common feature running through all the Jewish dialects is the /q/ phoneme and *-tu* 1sng suffix of the s-stem verb. The dialect of the Karaite Jews in the town of Hit on the Euphrates, however, was not so resilient against 'bedouin' influence and, although a *qəltu* dialect in origin,



now exhibits numerous ‘bedouin’ features and mixed ‘sedentary’ and ‘bedouin’ forms such as *qilit* ‘I said’ (Khan 1997). It is noteworthy that already in the Middle Ages the Karaite Jews were particularly open to absorption into the surrounding culture, as shown, for example, by their use of the Arabic script in many of their writings. Some of the differences between the ‘sedentary’ Jewish dialect of Tripoli and the Muslim ‘bedouin’ type dialect of the town are reminiscent of the communal dialect split in Baghdad, e.g. OA *qāf*: /q/ (J) versus /g/ (M); OA *rāʾ*: uvular trill [ʀ] or uvular fricative [ʁ] (J) versus /r/ [apical trill] (M) (Yoda 2005: 11). In the Jewish dialect of Aleppo the basic reflex of OA *rāʾ* is an apical trill but a velar fricative reflex occurs in some contexts, in particular in pause (Nevo 1991: 22, 32). Back rhotic phonemes are not always a distinctive feature of Jewish dialects. In Algiers a distribution of rhotics is found that is the reverse of the situation in Tripoli in that the uvular rhotic is found in the speech of Muslims but not among Jews (Cohen 1912: 27).

An illustration of some differences between the Jewish and non-Jewish ‘sedentary’ dialects can be provided by a few examples from the Jewish (J) and Muslim (M) dialects of Fes in Morocco. The distinctive phonological features of J are the pronunciation of OA *qāf* as /ʔ/ versus M /q/ and the phonological merger of the sibilants /s/ with /š/ and /z/ with /ž/ (OA *ḡīm*) versus the lack of merger in M. In verbal morphology the 3fsng inflection of the s-stem verb in J has merged with that of the 1sng and 2sng forms (*ktabt*) whereas in M the 3fsng form is distinct (*kābt*). In geminate trilateral verbs J lacks an augment element before suffixes beginning with a consonant (e.g. *ḥabbat* ‘I loved’), whereas the augment is present in M (*ḥabbīt*). These distinctive features were found in various other Jewish dialects in Morocco (Heath 2002: 132, 218, 222) and elsewhere in the Maghreb. There are also various lexical differences.

A case of only minor differentiation between Jewish and non-Jewish dialects was Cairo, where until the middle of the twentieth century there were communities of Rabbanite Jews and Karaite Jews. The dialect spoken by the Karaite Jews was virtually identical to that of the Muslims, in conformity with the general tendency for the Karaites to be particularly open to influences from the non-Jewish environment. The Rabbanite Jewish dialect, on the other hand, exhibited a few differences, but these were not always consistent. One notable feature was the use of the forms *niqtīl*—*niqtīlu* for the 1sng and 1pl of the p-stem verb, which, although found in some Egyptian dialects, especially in the western delta, is not found in the standard Muslim Cairene dialect (see Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume). There are also a few differences in individual verbs, e.g. J *gātīt* ‘she came’ versus M *gat*, and interrogative particles, e.g. J *ʔēš* ‘what’ versus M *ʔē*, J *kīf* ‘how’ versus M *ʔizzāy* (Blanc 1974).

With regard to the historical depth of the distinctive features of the Jewish spoken dialects that have been mentioned, many of them can be traced back to the Middle Ages. The pronunciation of *rāʾ* as a velar fricative ɣ, which is distinctive of the Jewish dialect of Baghdad and also of some other Jewish Iraqi dialects, such as that of Mosul (Blanc 1964: 20–5; Jastrow 1991b; cf also Procházka, this volume), is reflected in some medieval Judaeo-Arabic texts of Iraqi origin in which the letters *reš* and *gimel* interchange (Blau 1999: 252). Saʿadya Gaon, moreover, writing in the tenth century in his commentary to the *Sefer Yešira*, refers to the existence of a back rhotic consonant in the pronunciation of the spoken vernacular of the Jews of Iraq

(Khan 1995a). The patterns of *ʔimāla* that are characteristic of the Jewish Baghdad dialect correspond closely to the descriptions by the Arabic grammarians in the Abbasid period of the *ʔimāla* that existed in the speech of the general population of Baghdad in their time (Blanc 1964: 48–9). Some medieval Judaeo-Arabic texts of North African origin exhibit an interchange of *šin* and *sin*, reflecting a phonological merger of sibilants (Blau 1999: 251). Judaeo-Arabic texts emanating from medieval Egypt attest to the *niqtil*—*niqtilu* inflection of the p-stem verb and the 3fsng form *gātīt* ‘she came’ (Blau 1999: 57; 1980: 68).

Some of the Jewish dialects have developed innovative features through convergence with languages with which they are in contact in the area. This can be identified, for example, in the morphosyntax of clitics in Jewish dialects of northern Iraq. In the dialects of Arbīl and Aqra, for example, the copula in nominal clauses is expressed by shortened enclitic forms of the pronoun, which is attached to the end of the predicate, e.g. Arbīl *abūk-ūwe* ‘he is your father’ (< *abūk hūwe*), *malīh-ənta* ‘you are good’ (< *malīh ənta*) (Jastrow 1990b: 37). The progressive aspect in these dialects is expressed by attaching a proclitic particle to the p-stem verb, e.g. *təšrab* ‘you drink’ > *kū-təšrab* ‘you are drinking’ (Jastrow 1990b: 63). Both of these features, enclitic copulas and proclitic verbal particles, have parallels in the Kurdish and Neo-Aramaic dialects of the area. The main source of influence is likely to be Kurdish, since the features can also be found in the non-Jewish Arabic dialects of eastern Anatolia, which is a predominantly Kurdish-speaking region (Blanc 1964: 125; Jastrow 1978).

The Jewish Arabic dialects spoken by immigrants to the State of Israel have had an impact on the spoken Israeli Hebrew of these communities. This can be found, for example, in some features of the Hebrew of speakers from North Africa such as the following (Henshke 2013): Arabic verbal roots are given Hebrew inflection, e.g. *kol ha-yom hi boxa u-megažderet* ‘all day she cries and worries’ (< Ar. *gežder*); Hebrew verbal patterns may replicate those used in the cognate Arabic verb, e.g. *ha-ʿolam yitxarev* ‘the world will come to an end’ (cf. Ar. *yitxarrab* = standard Israeli Hebrew nifal *yexarev*); some uses of prepositions are calques of Arabic, e.g. *ʿovdim em-ha-boqer ʿad la-ʿerev* ‘(we) work from morning to evening’ (cf. Ar. *məš-šbāḥ ḥætta la-ʿšiyya* = standard Israeli Hebrew *ʿad ha-ʿerev*).

As in written Judaeo-Arabic, the spoken dialects all contain Hebrew, and to a lesser extent also Aramaic, lexical items. The majority of these refer to aspects of Jewish religious and communal life, but some are of a more general reference, e.g. in dialects of North Africa words such as *sunī* ‘evil person’ (< שׁוֹנֵי <SONE>) were in use and also grammatical words such as *ʔafillu* ‘even’ (< אַפִּילּוֹ <ʔAFILLŪ>) (Bar-Asher 2013). The degree to which these are used depends on the level of education of the speaker. As is generally the case with loanwords, there is a far greater proportion of nouns in the Hebrew component than of verbs.

Such Hebrew words are generally adapted phonologically and exhibit the same sound changes as occurred in the Arabic dialects. In the J. Egyptian dialect (Rosenbaum 2013), for example, the Hebrew ק *q* is pronounced as a glottal stop, e.g. *šeʿer* ‘lie’ (= שֶׁר <ŠEQER>), and in J. Yemenite dialects it is pronounced as a voiced uvular [g], e.g. *gābar* ‘grave’ (= קָבֵר <QEBER>) (Shachmon 2013a). Hebrew פ *p*, which is a sound generally not found in Arabic, is pronounced as *b* in many

dialects, e.g. J. Egyptian *besah* ‘Passover’ (= פֶּסַח <PESAḤ>). Another form of adaptation is the change of *p* to *f*, e.g. J. Tripoli *čfənnəq* ‘to indulge oneself’ (= חִתְּפָנֵק <HITPANNEQ>). Fricative ב *b* and ד *d* are pronounced as stops, e.g. J. Egyptian *kabed* ‘a disagreeable person’ (= כָּבֵד <KABED>) (Rosenbaum 2013), J. Baghdad *kabōd* (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b), J. Tripoli *kābūd* ‘honour’ (= כָּבוֹד <KABWD>) (Yoda 2013). The stop ʾ *g* is avoided in some dialects. In J. Tripoli, for example, which does not have the sound in its consonantal inventory, it is changed to the fricative *x*, e.g. *xnəb* ‘he stole’ (= חָנַב <XANAB>). In J. Tripoli Hebrew *t* became the affricate *č* in conformity with the phonological development of the Arabic dialect, e.g. *hāčān* ‘groom’ (= חָתָן <ḤATAN>) (Yoda 2013).

Adaptation is also found in the vowels of Hebrew words, e.g. J. Baghdad *səkka* ‘tabernacle’ (= סֻכָּה <SUKKA>) (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b), reflecting the shift of *u* > *ə* in closed syllables in this dialect (Blanc 1964: 30–1); J. Tripoli *səkkāna* ‘danger’ (= סִכָּנָה <SAKKANA>), *šəddūr* (= שְׂדוּר <SIDDUR>) ‘prayer book’, *hənəkkā* ‘Hanukka’ (= חֲנֻכָּה <ḤANUKKA>), reflecting the reduction of the three short vowels *a*, *i*, *u* to *ə* (Yoda 2013). In some cases different phonological processes occur in the vowels according to the grammatical category of the Hebrew word. In J. Tripoli, for instance, an /a/ vowel corresponding to *qameš* is retained in an open syllable in nouns and adjectives, e.g. *kāšīr* ‘kosher’ (= כָּשֵׁר <KAŠER>), but elided in *qal* verb forms, e.g. *bdəq* ‘he checked’ (= בִּדַּק <BADAQ>) (Yoda 2013).

The quality of vowels in principle corresponds to that of the vowels of Hebrew in the liturgical reading traditions. In the Hebrew component of J. Yemenite dialects, for example, *qameš* is pronounced as back *ō* and *seghol* as *a* in conformity to the traditional pronunciation of Hebrew in Yemen (Morag 1963), e.g. *nišmōtī* ‘my soul’ (= נִשְׁמַתִּי <NIŠMATI>), *amatī* ‘truly’ (= אֱמֶת <‘EMET>) (Shachmon 2013a).

In some cases Hebrew words do not undergo the phonological shifts that are found in the Arabic dialect. The Jews of Syria and south-eastern Turkey, for example, retain the uvular plosive *q* in Hebrew words, e.g. *qabira* (= קְבִירָה <QEBIRA>) ‘burial, cemetery’, whereas this has shifted to the glottal stopʾ in Arabic words, e.g. *ʿalb* ‘heart’ (< *qalb* >) (Arnold 2013). This was probably under the influence of the liturgical reading tradition of Hebrew, in which the uvular *q* was retained (Katz 1981: 10). As has been remarked, the reflex of original Arabic *rāʾ* in some of the Jewish Iraqi dialects is the velar fricative *ġ*. In Hebrew words within these dialects, however, a Hebrew ר *r* is a front rhotic *r*, e.g. *sēfer* (= סֵפֶר <SEFER>). In some cases hypercorrections take place, as in the pronunciation of Hebrew הגֵּעַל <HGʿLH> *haġʿāla* ‘rinsing (of Passover vessels)’ as *hirʿāla* by the Jews of ʿAna (Iraq), in which an original Hebrew velar fricative is pronounced as a front rhotic. Other Iraqi communities preserved the Hebrew velar fricative, e.g. Mosul *ʿaġāla*, Baghdad *ġaʿāla* (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b). The hypercorrect form *ʾarʿālā* is attested also in the dialect of the Jews of Aleppo (Nevo 1991: 22–3). The mismatch between front rhotics in Hebrew and back rhotics in the spoken vernacular language of the Jews of Iraq is mentioned already by Saʿadya Gaon in the tenth century (Khan 1995a). Saʿadya was referring to the Biblical Hebrew reading tradition of the Iraqi community and indeed the Iraqi communities pronounced Hebrew ר *r* as a front rhotic in their liturgical reading traditions down to modern times (Morag 1977: 6). The lack of

backing in *r* of words in the Hebrew component of the Iraqi dialects could, therefore, be considered as due to influence from the liturgical reading tradition, as in the case of *q* in the Hebrew component of the Jewish dialects of Syria.

Hebrew verbs may be inflected with Arabic morphological patterns, e.g. J. Iraqi *harhar* ‘he considered’ (= הִרְהַר <HIRHER>) (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b), J. Tripoli *čfənnəq* ‘to indulge oneself’ (= הִתְפַּנֵּן <HITPANNEQ>), the pattern *čfə<sup>sc</sup>al* being the dialectal reflex of the Arabic pattern V *tafa<sup>sc</sup>ala* (Yoda 2013). Hebrew nouns take Arabic suffixes, e.g. J. Arbīl *məzzālu* ‘his luck’ (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b). Various innovative verbs and nouns with Arabic morphological patterns are derived from Hebrew roots, e.g. J. Egyptian *makket* ‘he hit’ < Hebrew מָכּוּת <MAKKWT> *makkot* ‘blows’ (Rosenbaum 2013).

Nouns in the Hebrew component were often adapted to Arabic morphology, as in written Judaeo-Arabic, by, for example, forming broken plurals of nouns, e.g. J. Tripoli *šəddūr*, pl *šdāḏər* ‘prayer book’ (= סִדּוּר <SIDDUR> *siddur*) (Yoda 2013), J. Tlemcen: *sifr* pl *syafər* ‘book’ (= סֵפֶר <SEFER>) (Bar-Asher 1992: 77ff.).

Conversely, Hebrew morphological elements may be combined with Arabic words. This is found, for example, in Jewish dialects of North Africa, in which the Hebrew abstract suffix *-ut* is added to Arabic stems, e.g. *əl-kəfrot* ‘cruelty’ (< Ar. *kāfər* ‘renegade, cruel’), *ət-təṃšot* ‘narrow-mindedness’ (< Ar. *mṭəṃṃəṣ* ‘narrow-minded’) (Chetrit 2014a: 207–8).

Occasionally a Hebrew word in Jewish Arabic dialects is the result of what may be called a rhexus construction, in that it is a translation of a homonym of the Arabic original rather than a direct translation of the Arabic source, e.g. J. Iraqi *ze<sup>a</sup>* (זֶהָ <ZE<sup>a</sup>>) ‘arak’ (Ar. ‘*araq* i. ‘sweat’, ii. ‘arak’) (Geva-Kleinberger 2013b). A similar process is found in the Iraqi Jewish Aramaic dialects (Mutzafi 2013). Hebrew words were sometimes created within the Arabic dialects in imitation of the sound of an Arabic word. The Jews of Morocco used the word *puqiah* (= פּוֹקִיָּה <POQEAḤ>) in the sense of ‘Muslim jurist’ in imitation of the Arabic *fqih* (Bar-Asher 2013). In the J. Yemeni dialects the Hebrew word *zēdim* (זֵדִים <ZEDIM>) is used to refer to Muslims of the Zaidi Shī‘ī sect (Shachmon 2013a).

The fact that the Hebrew component generally underwent the same sound shifts as the Arabic dialects indicates that it must have entered the dialects at an early period. There are some signs that it was taken over from Aramaic dialects that were originally spoken by the communities who adopted Arabic. This is shown by the existence of some Aramaic words relating to core features of Jewish culture, e.g. the word *ma<sup>a</sup>al* ‘Yom Kippur eve’ (< Aramaic מַעְלִי <MA<sup>a</sup>ALLE>), which is used by the Jews of eastern North Africa, in the Constantine region of Algeria, in Tunisia and Libya (Bar-Asher 2013).

Many Hebrew words and expressions in the Arabic dialects underwent semantic changes. Thus, for example, the word מוֹמָר <MUMAR> *mumar*, which means ‘apostate’, came to mean ‘person with a tattoo’ in the Arabic of the Jews of Constantine in Algeria (Bar-Asher 2013).

In many communities Jews, especially traders, used a secret argot, consisting largely of Hebrew and Aramaic lexical items with Arabic grammatical inflection. A particularly developed argot of this kind is found among the Karaite goldsmiths of

Egypt (Rosenbaum 2002b; Khan 1995b). Some examples from this secret language are: *yaffet* ‘give a good price’, ‘treat (the client) well’ (< יָפֵה <YAFE>), *hallakū!* ‘get rid of him!’ (< הִלֵּךְ HLK), *šatta* ‘be quiet!’ (< שָׁטָה ŠTQ with shift of *q* > *ʔ*), *šaʔʔāl* ‘thief’ (< Aram. שָׁקֵל ŠQL), *šallak*, *fi šallak* ‘with you’ (< לָךְ <ŠL> + Ar. 2msng suffix), *ʿenaymak* ‘be careful’ (lit. ‘your eyes’ < עֵינַיִם <ʿENAYIM> + Ar. 2msng suffix). There were similar secret languages among the Jewish traders of the North African communities (Chetrit 2014a: 208–10). Hebrew expressions are sometimes used as derogatory substitutes for similar-sounding Arabic terms. The Jews of Yemen, for example, referred in their Arabic dialect to the Ottoman Turks by the term *ʔašmōnī*, which is based on the Hebrew form אָשָׁמָה <ʔAŠMA> ‘guilt’, pronounced *ʔašmō* in Yemen (Shachmon 2013b).

In sum, it is clear that Judaeo-Arabic is of great importance in a historical study of the Arabic language. This is due to the fact that written forms of Judaeo-Arabic preserve records of non-standard forms of Arabic from the early Middle Ages onwards and to the fact that the distinctness of the modern spoken Jewish dialects show that they had a separate history from that of the Muslim and Christian dialects.

## 6.4 FURTHER READING

An introduction to Classical Judaeo-Arabic and its linguistic background is given by Blau in his book *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judeo-Arabic*, originally published in 1965, but reissued twice in revised editions (the latest Jerusalem, 1999) that take into account more recent work in the field. The only systematic grammar of medieval Judaeo-Arabic is Blau, *A Grammar of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic* (second edition 1980), which is written in Hebrew. Blau has also compiled a dictionary of medieval Judaeo-Arabic texts (2006) and a handbook of Middle Arabic (2002), which contains a summary of the distinctive features of medieval Judaeo-Arabic. For a general survey of medieval Judaeo-Arabic see Gallego 2010a. Dictionaries of specific medieval Judaeo-Arabic corpora include Ratzaby 1985, which includes the rare words occurring in Saʿadya’s Bible translation, and Diem and Radenberg 1994 on the language of the Genizah documents. Studies of the Early Judaeo-Arabic texts have been published by Blau and Hopkins (1984; 1987; 2006) and Hopkins (2005; 2008). Analysis of some of these texts can be found also in Blau 2002.

For the language of the Jews in pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabic see Newby 1971; 1988. Wagner 2010 is a study of the Judaeo-Arabic of Genizah documents of various periods. The vocalized Judaeo-Arabic texts are studied by Khan (1992b; 2010; 2017) and Blau and Hopkins (1985). Hary (1992; 2009) has made detailed studies of Late Egyptian Judaeo-Arabic, with particular focus on *šarḥ* texts. Khan 1991; 1992a; 2013 and Wagner 2010; 2014 include studies of Late Egyptian Judaeo-Arabic documentary texts. For Late Egyptian Judaeo-Arabic literary texts see Palva 2008c. Blanc (1981; 1985) has studied the Judaeo-Arabic passages in a seventeenth-century legal text. For the language situation of the Arabic-speaking Jews of medieval Spain see Gallego 2010b. Studies on the Late Judaeo-Arabic traditions of the North African communities have been made by Bar-Asher (1998; 2001a,b; 2010), Chetrit (1994;

2007; 2009; 2014a; 2014b), Zafrani (1980), Tobi and Tobi (2000). Avishur (1986) discusses some features of Late Judaeo-Arabic written in Iraq and has published numerous Late Judaeo-Arabic texts, e.g. Avishur 1998. For studies of Hebrew and Aramaic lexical elements in Late Judaeo-Arabic see Chetrit 1991, Hary 1999, and Bahat 2002.

For a general survey of the literature on spoken Judaeo-Arabic dialects with special attention to those of North Africa see Cohen 1978; 1981 and Bar-Asher 1996. For a general survey of the Judaeo-Arabic dialects of Iraq see Jastrow 1990a. The classical treatment of the phenomenon of communal dialectal divergence is Blanc 1964. A general description of the Jewish Baghdad dialect is given by Mansour (1991). Jastrow has published numerous studies of the Jewish dialects of Iraq and the adjacent region, including the dialects of ‘Aqra and Arbil (1990b), Nuṣaybīn and Qamiṣlī (1989b), Moṣul (1989a; 1991b), and Sendor (1991a; 1993). The dialects of Iraqi Jewish migrants in South Asia and East Asia are discussed by Geva-Kleinberger (2012; 2013a). The dialect of the Karaite Jews of Hīt is described in Khan 1997. Studies on North African Jewish dialects include those of Tunis (Cohen 1964; 1975), Fez (Brunot and Malka 1939; 1940), Moroccan dialects in general (Heath 2002; Lévy 2009), Sefrou (Stillman 1988), Tafilalet (Lévy 1995), Algiers (Cohen 1912), Constantine (Tirosch-Becker 1988; 1989; 2006; 2012), Sousse (Saada 1969a; 1969b), Jerba (Saada 2003), Tripoli (Yoda 2005). Some details of the Jewish dialect of Tlemcen can be found in Marçais 1902. Jewish dialects of south-eastern Turkey were treated by Arnold (1998; 2007; 2010a,b). A description of the Jewish dialect of Aleppo was made by Nevo (1991). The Arabic dialects spoken by Jews in the Galilee that are native to the region have been documented by Geva-Kleinberger (2004; 2005; 2009). The dialect of Egyptian Jews is studied by Blanc (1974) and by Rosenbaum (2002a; 2008). The dialects of the Jews of Sudan are treated by Geva-Kleinberger (2002a; 2002b). Piamenta 2000 gives some details of the dialect of the Jews of Jerusalem in the first half of the twentieth century. Descriptions of the Jewish dialects of Yemen can be found in Goitein 1932; 1933; 1960; 1970, Diem 1973: 33–4, 77, 111, Morag 1963, Tobi 1986, Piamenta 1990, and Shachmon 2007.

Studies of the Hebrew and Aramaic component in modern Jewish dialects include Goitein 1931; 1970, Kara 1988; 1992, Shachmon 2013a [Yemen], Bar-Asher 1992; 1998, Chetrit 1991, Tedghi 1994; 2002, Henshke 2007, Yoda 2013 [North Africa], Avishur 1993, Sabar 2004 [Iraq], Avishur 2001 [Iraq, Syria, Egypt]. For the description of a trade argot used by Karaite Jews in Egypt see Khan 1995b and Rosenbaum 2002b.

Articles on pre-modern and modern Judaeo-Arabic can be found also in *EALL* and the *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World* (Brill), and articles on the Hebrew component of Judaeo-Arabic can be found in the *EHLL*.

Further bibliography relating to the wider field of Judaeo-Arabic literature can be found in Khan 2002 and the bibliographies of Waldman 1989 and Gallego, Bleaney, and García Suárez 2010.



# The Levant

JÉRÔME LENTIN

## 7.1 THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA COVERED

This chapter could have been entitled ‘The Near East’, or more properly, ‘Bilād al-Shām’. The dialects concerned were and are spoken in Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, a part of southern Turkey, and one village in Cyprus, to use the modern state names. They belong mainly to the Syro-Lebanese group, as it is traditionally labelled, but other groups are also found in the area, which is far from being linguistically homogeneous: Shāwi dialects, north Arabian ‘bedouin’ dialects (especially the north-west Arabian sub-group in the Sinai, the Negev, and southern Jordan, see Palva 2008a: 400), Mesopotamian dialects, and Anatolian dialects spoken by migrants who settled in the north-east of Syria a century ago. For these last groups see Procházka, this volume; they will be dealt with only in passing here. Nonetheless, the dialects spoken in Cilicia (in the region of Antiochia), and in Kormakiti (Cyprus), which are both part of the Syro-Lebanese group, will be given some consideration.<sup>1</sup>

## 7.2 ON THE EVE OF ARABICIZATION

The presence of Arabs is attested in the Levant long before the Arab conquests. Without going back into antiquity, it will suffice to recall here that ‘At various times before the second century AD, Arabs are found in the Sinai, southern Palestine, Samaria, northern Transjordan, southern Transjordan, southern parts of the Lebanon, the Beqā‘ Valley and the Anti-Lebanon, Mount Hermon, northern, central and southern Syria, the Jezīrah’ (Macdonald 2009: 280–3). As for the presence of the Arabic language, we know for instance that ‘there was [in the first century BC] a strong admixture of Arabic-speaking people in Emesa and its surroundings’ (Retsö 2003: 409) and that, from the fourth century AD at the latest, Arabic-speaking nomadic tribes migrated into the Ḥawrān.

<sup>1</sup> Some overlap with Procházka’s chapter could not be avoided. We did not see this as a drawback, especially since we hold different views on some issues.

(Contini 1987: 63). Nomads and semi-nomads were trading with the merchants of Syria's towns and 'it seems that these Arabic-speaking pastoral peoples were, on the eve of Islam, nearly as ubiquitous... in many inland districts of Syria as they were in the Arabian Peninsula itself. They had long dominated southernmost Syria, where the Nabataean Arabs had once established their mercantile capital at Petra. They occupied at times the valleys between the mountain folds in central Syria, such as the rich plain of... the Beqā'... and certain regions of Palestine. Even in northern Syria, they had been able to conquer and establish dynasties in many towns on the fringes of the steppe: Ḥimṣ (Emesa), Ḥarrān, Edessa, Hatra.... As for the Syrian steppe itself, of course, it had been dominated by Arabic-speaking peoples for centuries....' (Donner 1981: 95).

As for the Lebanese Mountains, 'the 'Āmila tribe, originally said to have been living near the Dead Sea, moved into the mountains south and east of the Litani River, what is now called Jabal Amil, in pre- or early Islamic times' (Magidow 2013: 184). Thus '(i)n the early first century AD, we already see evidence of Arabic use in the area of the southern Levant and northern Arabia, suggesting that Arabic was in use as a spoken language even before this time... The Plague of Justinian in AD 542 is a likely starting point for the Arabization of settled areas of the Levant...' (Magidow 2013: 185). 'These disasters would therefore have created conditions which encouraged, or even forced, the Arabic speaking nomads to move into the areas which had previously been the domain of sedentary Aramaic speakers' (Magidow 2013: 182–3). 'The dialects of these newly Arabized areas would have been local, coming from the Hawran and the nearby deserts, in contrast to those dialects that moved in later from the Arabian Peninsula or possibly from Islamic Iraq' (Magidow 2013: 185). 'In 758 AD, the Caliph commissioned a branch of the Tanūkh federation that at the time was living in northern Syria to move into the hills around Beirut, as well as around Mount Hermon, what is now on the south-eastern border of Lebanon, Syria and the... Golan Heights' (Magidow 2013: 185).

These brief citations are intended merely to draw attention to the fact that because of the long-established presence of Arabic in the Levant and the various origins of the Arabic-speaking population, whatever their number, there was certainly, at the time of the conquests, a great variety of Arabic dialects (always bearing in mind that 'a tribe was not necessarily a linguistic unit' (Magidow 2013: 127–8)). This also means that the dialects of the region at that time are not to be confused—whatever their past historical relationship—with the dialects of the Arabian Peninsula which would later be exported to other vast areas of the now Arabic-speaking world (Al-Jallad 2012: 26–7, 388; Durand 1999: 96). Within the region, the original sociolinguistic situations were various, in particular because of the language(s) spoken by neighbouring communities and the different types of bilingualism that resulted. The conquests and the lengthy process of Arabicization that followed eventually modified these situations and/or made them more complex, especially with the rise of new cities, although the process of Arabicization might have been slower there than some have imagined: 'The presence then of proportionately larger Aramaic populations and still small Arabic populations is not a recipe for the linguistic success of Arabic, and so it seems likely that the cities of the Levant were Arabized in a slower process than in the countryside, and probably this Arabization significantly post-dated both the Islamic conquests and the Arabization of the countryside' (Magidow 2013: 184).



## 7.3 THE SOURCES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

### 7.3.1 EXTANT SOURCES

Extant sources on Levantine, as is the case for the historical study of any Arabic dialect up to pre-modern times, are scarce, and, since texts written in the colloquial language are virtually non-existent (or no longer available), information has to be extracted almost exclusively from indirect sources of several kinds: bi- or multilingual texts, foreign travellers' accounts, and especially Middle Arabic texts.<sup>2</sup> For the Mameluke and Ottoman periods, valuable sources (unpublished for the most part) are handbooks, vocabularies, and grammars composed by and for Arabic speakers who wanted to learn foreign languages, Turkish for example, since the variety of Arabic they use is often colloquial in character. From the eighteenth century onwards, we have similar works for Westerners wanting to learn Arabic, written by European missionaries and orientalis. Since the beginnings of Arabic dialectology (e.g. Mikhā'il Šabbāgh 1886), prominent works, such as Barthélemy's encyclopedic dictionary (1935–69) or Al-ʿAsadī's *Encyclopedia* (1981–8) have also become, with the passage of time, invaluable references for the history of Levantine dialects.<sup>3</sup>

'Popular literature' such as folktales, 'Syrian' manuscripts of *The Thousand and One Nights*, *sira*-s (popular epics or heroic narratives), and especially shadow-theatre plays (*bābāt Karakōz*) which are in plain colloquial, have also preserved a lot of information. Unfortunately, the oldest manuscripts of these texts do not date back earlier than the sixteenth century. This is also true of 'colloquial' poetry which is sometimes composed in a conventional ('Artistic Colloquial') register or an archaizing poetic standard, neither of which reflects everyday usage. Some types of poem (many of the *mawwāl* genre, for instance) are, however, written in plain colloquial and offer much valuable insight into living speech.

Comparative historical dialectology is of course of great help. However, it should be used with great caution, again because of constant contact and interaction between dialects in more or less close geographical proximity.

### 7.3.2 MIDDLE ARABIC TEXTS

Texts written in Middle Arabic, since early times, provide a large amount of lexical data, information about dialectal phonetics and morphology, and, in a more subtle manner (e.g. through calques, transposed, or mixed constructions), about syntax. They also make use of the colloquial variants of devices like demonstratives,

<sup>2</sup> *Laḥn al-ʿamma* treatises are collections of data that are not always referenced to identifiable places or times. Moreover, as has often been pointed out, and despite the literal meaning of the phrase ('solecisms of the common people') they generally tell us more about certain linguistic habits of social groups belonging to the upper classes.

<sup>3</sup> These two monumental works are full of information not only on the Aleppine dialect(s), but also on many other dialects of *Bilād al-Shām*.

conjunctions, adverbs, and auxiliary verbs, all admissible and sometimes even prescribed as the Middle Arabic norm. But, even when the author of a text is known, such dialectalisms should not automatically—except in the case of strongly colloquializing texts which contain marked localisms—be interpreted as characteristic of his own spoken dialect (which could be mixed, since linguistic biographies are complex). It is just as likely that they may be part of the dominant dialect in the surrounding socio-political context, or of a culturally prestigious dialect, or of a local koineized usage, or of a (colloquial or Middle Arabic) literary tradition. See Lentin 2008: 217–18.

There are some other caveats to bear in mind. Orthographic conventions<sup>4</sup> are easily misinterpreted. To give just a few examples, the notation of the *tāʾ* and *dāl* by ث and ذ does not necessarily indicate that they are preserved and realized in speech as interdental; nor does their notation by ت and ذ always indicate that they have merged with dentals. The superscript dot is rather a conventional way of writing (and *tāʾ* and *dāl* can very well also be written with it). On the other hand, *s* and *z* for *tāʾ* and *dāl* (in borrowings from CLA/MSA) clearly indicate the loss of the interdental. The regular notation of *qāf* by ق in a text does not say anything about the actual realization of this phoneme (which could be *g* or the glottal stop or the uvular *q*) in the underlying dialect, but is merely an etymological notation. On the other hand, ‘hypercorrect’ *qāf* for *hamza* clearly indicates that its colloquial realization is [ʔ].

Some other conventions are sophisticated. Initial [CC-], for instance, is written either CC- or prosthetic *ʾalif* + CC-, in implicit reference to CLA/MSA orthography, in order to avoid ambiguity: *mwāḥ* (‘waves’) is written موج (since امواج would be interpreted as *ʾamwāḥ*), but *ḥsayn* (or *ḥsēn*) (‘fox’) is written احسين, with prosthetic *ʾalif*, since حسين would be interpreted as the male name *Ḥusayn*.<sup>5</sup>

Orthography thus conceals many phonetic facts, hence the particular importance of documents in or on Arabic written in other languages and scripts, especially of Arabic texts written in Hebrew characters (see Khan, this volume) or in *karšūnī* (Syriac script), because these two scripts, even if their spellings share with Arabic many conventions, have created their own special ones and sometimes reveal phenomena that would otherwise remain hidden.

Other conventions are of a different order, and are more difficult to figure out. Their interpretation remains hypothetical and a matter for conjecture. A well-known example is how to interpret الذي [*alladī*] used as an invariable relative pronoun. Most scholars agree that it is<sup>6</sup> a convention for colloquial *illi*, allowing the writer to discreetly avoid writing الـ (= *illi*, obviously felt too colloquial to the eye, although it does occur in some heavily colloquializing texts) by using what might be termed, on the model of ‘euphemism’, a ‘eugraphism’. This is highly probable, but cannot be proved.

Such stylistic writing conventions can be more refined. For personal pronouns for example, one notes that colloquial independent pronoun forms such as (1, 2, and 3pl) *niḥna*, *ʾantu*, *hinne(n)* frequently occur in texts, whereas suffixed forms such as

<sup>4</sup> Owing to scholarly neglect, these conventions are still not well studied, and some are puzzling. For short vowels, see Lentin 2012b.

<sup>5</sup> For details, see Lentin 1997: 122–6 (§3.17.1.).

<sup>6</sup> Most of the time, cf. Al-Jallad 2012: 420–1.

(2 and 3pl) *-kon* and *-hon* are rare (contrary to 3msng *-u/-o*)—a phenomenon still alive in contemporary usage. One can therefore assume without much hesitation that *-kum* and *-hum* are to be read *-kon* and *-hon*. See Lentin 2012a: 80.

One can also reasonably suspect that *hāhunā* ‘here’ is to be interpreted, most of the time, as a way of writing colloquial *hawn* / *hōn* (sometimes found in texts); but it cannot be proved with absolute certainty. Similar analyses can be proposed for syntactic phenomena and reveal possible colloquial grammatical devices or constructions.

### 7.3.3 THE DAMASCUS PSALM FRAGMENT

The famous bilingual (Greek-Arabic) Psalm fragment published by Violet in 1901 is a unique document of its kind and of special importance, since the Arabic text is written in Greek characters.<sup>7</sup> It has long been dated to the eighth century, but this dating has in recent years been a matter of debate. While Mavroudi (2008: 327) dates it to the late ninth or even to the early tenth century, which led Macdonald to change his view (from pre-Islamic (OA) to early Islamic), Al-Jallad inclines towards a much earlier dating: ‘probably... between the fourth century and fifth century AD’ (Al-Jallad 2012: 145). The interpretation of some of the spelling conventions used in the Greek transcription is also controversial and part of the information provided in this exceptional manuscript must therefore be used with caution.<sup>8</sup>

### 7.3.4 LIMITED INFORMATION ON THE LANGUAGE SITUATION

It is known that, even if the linguistic peculiarities of individuals are criticized or even mocked in Arabic historical or literary texts (especially when it comes to ‘mistakes’ in the use of CLA), comments on the language context, such as the languages spoken, dialectal variation, and mutual understanding between speakers of different dialects, are rare and scattered, even—with some exceptions—in geographical works or travel narratives.<sup>9</sup> Arab lexicographers do, however, mention dialectal (mainly lexical) peculiarities.<sup>10</sup> When, for instance, we read in Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998 III: 982 that the Damascene ‘*ālim* (‘savant’) Ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī (d. 1175) joined a caravan of

<sup>7</sup> Photographs can be seen in Mavroudi 2008: 342–54 and online at [http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN685013049&PHYSID=PHYS\\_0001](http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN685013049&PHYSID=PHYS_0001).

<sup>8</sup> See Kahle 1904 (text IX, and presentation pp. xiv–xv), Blau 2002: 68–71 (and, on stress, Blau 1972: 480–1 = Blau 1988: 301–2), Al-Jallad 2012: 404–10, and Corriente 2007, who (319–20) would like to regard this fragment as ‘a birth certificate of Nabaṭī Arabic’, ‘the immediate forerunner of Neo-Arabic, in the northern regions of the Middle East inhabited by Arabs even many decades before Islam... with all the usual ingredients of a variety of language developed on foreign soil and having gone through the stages of creolization and partial decreolization...’. The most detailed linguistic analysis is now Al-Jallad 2012: 145–74 (§2.3.2.8). For bibliographical references on dating see Vollandt 2015: 56–7 (n. 46).

<sup>9</sup> Incidentally, this is certainly partly due to the fact that language was not a crucial component of cultural identity, as it was to become in the late nineteenth century and onwards.

<sup>10</sup> Lentin 2012a: 82ff. (see §7.15.1). In rare cases, some words are even attributed to specific towns or regions of the *Bilād al-Shām* (Lentin 2012a §4.3.2).

bedouins and went with them to Bahrain and Najd where he 'learned to speak the dialect of the local bedouin ('Arab') (*ta'allama luġatahum wa kalāmahum*), we are not astonished, but we would like to know if he had problems understanding the language of the bedouin he travelled with, who probably belonged to tribes nomadizing in the Syrian Desert (*bādiyat al-Shām*).

It is only for more recent periods (from the late nineteenth century onwards) that we find more circumstantial (although generally stereotyped) accounts of dialectal usages, often in the context of rivalries between towns. For instance the Damascene realizations *z* for *ž* and *s* for *š* in the presence of other sibilants (*zazar* for *žazar* 'carrots', *sams* for *šams* 'sun') are often reported and criticized.

Ayalon (1984: 37) quotes (partly) the personal account of Ibn al-Ji'ān (d. 1496) reporting that the dominant language in his time, in the area between Latakia and Al-Bīra (today Biredjik, on the Euphrates River), was Turkish. As a matter of fact it reads: *wa 'ahlu l-Bīra yataḥaddaṭūna bi-al-'arabī al-laṭīf 'aḳṭar min al-turkī bi-xilāf mā taqaddama min al-bilād fa-'innahu hīna tawaġġahnā min al-Lāḏiqiyya wa 'ilā al-Bīra lam yakun kalāmuhum 'illā al-turkī*.<sup>11</sup> Again, only a few remarks of this kind can be gathered from the texts. Information on 'communal' dialectal usages does not abound either. The Aleppine historian Ibn al-'Adīm (d. 1262) reports (1951: 204) for example, in one sentence, four words typical of the Jewish dialect of his town (in 1014/1015), among which are the verb *ṭa'az* 'to beat' and the pronunciation of *r* as [ġ] in *yixġib bētak* 'may He destroy your house' (i.e. 'damn you!').

## 7.4 LEVANTINE AND EGYPTIAN DIALECTS

When looking into the history of Levantine dialects, one cannot but be struck by the numerous similarities between them and the Egyptian dialects, whether contemporary or past. This is of course not surprising given the geographical proximity of the two regions, but it is mostly due to the continuous contacts and relations between them over centuries of their history. Without going into details or positing the existence, at some point in their history, of a larger 'Egypto-Levantine' dialectal group, or rather of a transregional koine,<sup>12</sup> it is nonetheless important to emphasize the fact that the two areas have, in the past, shared and borrowed from each other many linguistic features, some of which have survived in one or the other area, or in both. It is thus often difficult, when we come across such items, to determine whether

<sup>11</sup> 'The people of Al-Bīra spoke elegant Arabic more than they spoke Turkish, contrary to the situation in the cities we had left behind. Because from the moment we left Latakia and until we reached al-Bīra, people spoke only Turkish'. Ayalon used the old edition: 'Abū al-Baqā' Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā b. al-Ji'ān, *Al-qawl al-mustaḍraf fi safar mawlānā al-malik al-'aṣraf* (*Viaggio in Palestina e Soria di Kaid Ba XVIII sultano della II dinastia Mamelucca, fatto nel 1477*), ed. Ridolfo Vittorio Lanzzone, Torino, G. B. Paravia e c., 1878 (p. 17). [http://www.europeana.eu/portal/record/9200143/BibliographicResource\\_2000069508358.html](http://www.europeana.eu/portal/record/9200143/BibliographicResource_2000069508358.html). Two new editions of Ibn al-Ji'ān's *Mustaḍraf* have now been published, one by 'Umar Tadmurī (Tripoli, Lebanon: Jarrouss Press, 1984, with the subtitle *Riḥlat Qāyṭbāy 'ilā Bilād al-Shām*), the other by Muḥammad Zaynahum (Cairo: al-Dār al-Thaqāfiyya li-l-Nashr, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> For the Ottoman period, see Lentin 1996.

they are part of a common heritage, the survival of an old ‘native’ feature, or an ancient borrowing (which may have disappeared in its ‘original’ area). Methodologically, this means that it is necessary always to keep in view past and present Egyptian dialects in order to identify or correctly interpret certain Levantine linguistic facts.

## 7.5 PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

### 7.5.1 *ġim* (\**/ğ/*)

It is well known that *ğ* was formerly a voiced velar (\**g*), as it clearly appears in many borrowings from various languages (Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Persian (see Lentin 2003)).

Although the sources are silent about the realizations of \**/ğ/* in ‘sedentary’/rural dialects, it has been repeatedly noted by dialectologists for more than a century that [ʒ] is increasing at the expense of [ġ]. Interestingly, the thirteenth-century Turkish–Arabic Glossary edited by Houtsma<sup>13</sup> provides evidence for a (today marginal) third realization. To describe the pronunciation of Turkish *ç*, the author writes: *Wa ‘ammā al-ġim al-manqūṭa bi-ṭalāt nuqaṭ fa-hya ‘aydan mufaxxama bayna al-šin wa al-ġim tušbih talaffuḍ nabaṭ bilād Ba‘labakk bi-al-ġim* ‘The *ġim* with three dots below is also pharyngealized (*mufaxxama*), between *šin* and *ġim*, like the *ġim* pronounced by the peasants of the region of Baalbeck’. This could very well point to a voiceless realization [č] of */ğ/*, which to my knowledge has not been reported for the concerned area (Grotzfeld 1978: 48–9; Fleisch 1974 *passim*) but which would not be surprising, since it is still attested today in Syria, 30 kilometres from Baalbek, in a small area around Rās il-Ma‘arra (Behnstedt 1997a: map 3), as it was in 1935, not much farther away, in the Wādi Mnīn and near Yabrūd (Lecerf 1982: 107; Behnstedt 1997a: map 3).<sup>14</sup>

### 7.5.2 THE SHIFT OF INTERDENTALS TO DENTALS

The shift of interdental spirants to dental stops is common in many languages, and well-known in Semitic. In Arabic, it is considered a hallmark of the ‘sedentary’ dialects, in both the Mashreq and the Maghreb, although many of them retained the old interdentals until recently, and some (including Cypriot Arabic)<sup>15</sup> still retain them today. There is no reason to suppose that this shift in the Maghreb originated in the Mashreq. It is rather a universal trend, and it must have occurred there independently.

As far as the Levant is concerned, this shift is certainly old. Garbell (1958: 309–10) dates it to the ninth to tenth centuries. It is uncertain whether it can be dated earlier.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Houtsma 1894: 6, 5–7, 9, 2–6; 3, 5–7 (Arabic text).

<sup>14</sup> As for today, see the remarks of Behnstedt 1990: 51, n. 19.

<sup>15</sup> Only to some extent, since sometimes \**/d/* > */t/*. Note also that \**d* (as \**/d/*) > *d*.

<sup>16</sup> For Hopkins 1984: 33, n. 3 ‘it can be regarded as certain that this shift had already taken place considerably earlier [than the middle of the first Islamic century], but remained concealed behind the orthography’.

If the Ḥarrān Inscription (AD 568) is considered written in an OA dialect, it may exhibit ‘the earliest example of the loss of interdental’.<sup>17</sup> We have an example of  $\underline{t} > t$  from the middle of the late seventh century: *nabʿat* ‘we send’.<sup>18</sup> Arab lexicographers report doublets such as *ṭabara* / *tabara* ‘to perish’ (Nöldeke 1904: 10, n. 3), *waṭana* / *watana* ‘to stay (in a place)’, cf. *waṭana* ‘same meaning’, *xatla* / *xatla* ‘lower belly’, *ḍabara* / *dabara* ‘to write (a book)’ (from ʿAbū Ṭayyib al-Lughawī, d. 961); *maḍfūf* / *madfūf* ‘much attended (place)’ (Al-Jundī 1978: 355). In his *Muzhir*, (vol. I: 538–9 and 544–7), Al-Suyūṭī gives further examples of doublets (11 for  $\underline{t}$  /  $t$  and 31 for  $\underline{d}$  /  $d$ ), e.g. *taxxa* / *ṭaxxa* ‘to become too soft (flour, clay) by reason of too much water’, *ʾaktam* / *ʾaktam* ‘stuffed, sated’; *xardala* / *xardala* ‘to cut (meat)’, *midl* / *midl* ‘hidden; puny’, *daḥmal* / *ḍaḥmal* ‘to roll (s’thing)’, *daffa* / *ḍaffa* ‘to finish off (a wounded man)’, *ʾaḡḍaʿa* / *ʾaḡḍaʿa* ‘to cut off s’one’s nose’. All this probably points to ancient dialects that had known this shift. But in the absence of further early evidence, one can certainly provisionally say (Al-Jallad 2012: 240): ‘it is clear that Proto-Levantine Arabic continued all three Proto-Arabic interdental fricatives’ (see also Al-Jallad 2017a §3.3). The Damascus Psalm fragment (see §7.3.3) has only  $\theta$  for  $\underline{t}$  ( $\underline{t}$ ) (Hopkins 1984: 35, n. 1; Al-Jallad 2012: 157).

It has often been suggested that the merger of interdentals with stops was influenced by the Aramaic substrate: ‘From an ancient period, interdental spirants already had a tendency, in some dialects at the fringes of the Aramaic regions, to merge with dental stops’ (Cantineau 1960: 41). Corriente 1976: 77, referring to Cantineau, still mentions it among other factors: ‘later on interdentals merged with dentals (their distinction blurred by allophonic distribution in the Aramaic substratum)’. This is questionable when one looks at the history of interdentals in Aramaic,<sup>19</sup> and if one remembers that they are maintained in not a few Neo-Aramaic dialects. Even if an Aramaic influence may have played an accessory role, it does not appear very likely, and one is inclined to share the scepticism that has long been expressed by scholars like Cohen 1962: 126 (= Cohen 1970: 110(–11)) (also discussing the koine theory): ‘One thus cannot consider the change [of the interdentals] to stops as a fact of an ancient “urban koine” due, as has often been maintained, to the Aramaic substrate of this assumed koine’. See also Fleisch 1974: 135–7;<sup>20</sup> Diem 1979: 44, 50.

For later periods we have of course attestations, e.g. Al-ʿAskarī (d. after 1009) 1989: 388 *al-ḡuraḍ bi al-ḍāl muʿḡama wa al-ʿāmma taqūluhu bi al-ḍāl wa-hwa xaṭaʿ* ‘[the noun] *ḡuraḍ* [should be pronounced] with a dotted *d* [i.e.  $\underline{d}$ ]; ordinary people

<sup>17</sup> If ṬLMW is to be read *Ḍālim*, the Greek transcription, *Ταλειμων*, suggests  $*\underline{d} > \underline{t}$  or  $> \underline{d}$  (Mascitelli 2006: 183–7; Al-Jallad 2012: 123–4).

<sup>18</sup> Hopkins 1984: 33 §30a. It is of course reasonable to suppose a parallel shift  $\underline{d} > d$  (not to speak of  $\underline{d} > \underline{d}$ ), but after all there is no compelling reason to assume that there is necessarily a ‘phonological symmetry’ (§34 p. 36).

<sup>19</sup> ‘Proto-Semitic  $*\underline{t}$ ,  $*\underline{d}$ , and  $*\underline{t}$  yield  $t$ ,  $d$ , and  $\underline{t}$  from Middle Aramaic on’; ‘reliable dental spellings of Proto-Semitic interdentals are attested since the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC’ (Kogan in Weninger 2011b: 100, 101); see also Creason 2008: 113–14.

<sup>20</sup> In his article ‘Premiers résultats d’une enquête dialectale au Liban’, originally published in 1959, which provides convincing argumentation based on dialectal geography. For complements on the Lebanese dialectal data see Grotzfeld 1978.

say it with *d* [= *ḡurad*] which is incorrect'. In the Arabic part of the bilingual Luke's Gospel fragment (dated 1043) published by Monferrer-Sala (2005), it is interesting to note that interdental shifts to stops (§4.4 p. 114 and §4.17 p. 116) but are retained in the transcriptions of Greek proper nouns and toponyms with *θ* or *δ* (§4.7 p. 115 and §4.20 pp. 116–17). The picture given by the fifteenth-century list in Muth 2010 (Jerusalem dialect) seems somewhat contradictory: while we find dentals in words like *tom* 'garlic', *tenin*, *tlate*, *temenie* (*t(i)nēn*, *t(a)lāte*, *tmānye*) 'two, three, eight', interdentals are clearly retained (or shifted to labiodentals?) in 'silver' *fouua* (*fiḏḏa*), 'gold' *veeb* (*dahab*), 'white' *abief* (*ʔabyaḏ*). This could be due to dialect differences between informants. In Breydenbach 2011<sup>21</sup> (end of the fifteenth century) we find dentals in *daher* 'back', *nebijd* 'wine', *tawb* 'tunic'.

Except for one village in the extreme north-east of Syria, there is no example in the Levant of the shift of the old interdentals to sibilants or labiodental fricatives, as is the case in some Mesopotamian and Anatolian dialects. Of course, sibilants (*s*, *z*, and *ḡ*) are well attested in the dialects which have not retained the interdentals as their reflexes in borrowings from CLA/MSA and in Arabic words previously borrowed by Turkish (and/or Persian) and then re-borrowed (generally with semantic changes) back into Arabic.

### 7.5.3 *qāf*(\**/q/*) → */ʔ/*

The complex evolution of *\*/q/* to a glottal stop, generally identical with (but in some dialects phonologically distinct from) *hamza*, is not a hallmark of Levantine dialects. It is attested in Egypt, and in the Maghreb (in some 'pre-Hilālī' dialects such as the old dialects of Fes, Tetouan, Chefchaouen, and Tangiers in Morocco, in Tlemcen in western Algeria, and in the dialect of the Jews of Algiers),<sup>22</sup> and in Maltese. This could mean that it is an ancient feature, imported during the early conquests. Although Garbell (1958: 313) dates this shift to the eleventh to fifteenth centuries for the 'east Mediterranean', there are other reasons to believe that it could have occurred earlier.

A possible ancient forerunner should be mentioned: two Safaitic inscriptions spell the verb *qyḏ* 'to spend the dry season' as *ʔyḏ*, suggesting the change of *\*q* → *ʔ*.<sup>23</sup> Some examples, admittedly limited in number, are reported by early Arab philologists and lexicographers for old layers of the language. 'Abd al-Tawwāb 1995 [1977]: 12–13<sup>24</sup> gives the following list: *qaṣabahu* / *ʔaṣabahu bihi* 'to blame s'one for s'thing' (Al-ʔAṣmaʿī d. 828); *qafz* / *ʔafz* 'jumping' (ʔAbū Ṭayyib al-Lughawī d. 961); *zuhāq* / *zuhāʔ miʔa* 'near 100' (same author); *zannaqa* / *zannaʔa* 'alā' 'iyālihi (Ibn Maḏḏūr, *Lisān*

<sup>21</sup> See p. 779–86 *Synopse der Glossare* (where many words are not, or not correctly, identified).

<sup>22</sup> Often only in the speech of women or the elderly.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Jallad 2017a: §3.7.4.1. Macdonald (2009 315–16) rightly observes that this shift (along with */ḏ/* > */d/* in the same word), 'in a totally nomadic context', 'nowadays typical of urban dialects in the Levant and unknown in bedouin speech—should make us very cautious about applying to ancient texts distinctions in urban vs. bedouin dialects from modern dialectology'.

<sup>24</sup> = Online version: 444–5; communication originally presented at the 45th session, 32nd sitting, of the *Maḡlis* of the Arabic Academy in Cairo (19 February 1979) and at the 8th sitting of the *Muʔtamar* (28 May 1979).



*al-ʿArab*, thirteenth century) ‘to reduce family expenses (out of poverty or by greed)’; *qaramal/ʿarama* ‘to eat little’ (Ibn al-Sikkīt ninth century); *qaṣr / ʿaṣr* ‘prison’ (*Lisān al-ʿArab*, thirteenth century) and *qaṣara / ʿaṣara* ‘to imprison’ (Al-Kisāʾī d. 805; cf. *ʿasara* ‘same meaning’); *taqabbada / taʿabbaḍa* ‘to contract one’s legs’ (*Lisān al-ʿArab*, thirteenth century); *waqba / waʿba* ‘a hole/cavity in the rock which retains water’ (same reference); *al-faṣaq = intiṣār al-naḥs min al-ḥiṣ* ‘to be filled with a strong desire’ (ʿAbū ʿAmr al-Shaybānī d. c.828); cf. *tafaṣṣaʿa = intaṣara* ‘to spread out’ (which, as ʿAbd al-Tawwāb remarks, could be derived, by ‘sophisticated hyperurbanism’, from *tafaṣṣā* ‘same meaning’); *qafaxtuḥu ʿalā al-raʿs* ‘I beat him on the head’ cf. *ʿafaxtuḥu* (‘I beat him on the top of his head’ [yāfūx])’ (Al-Jawharī d. before 1008, *al-Sihhah*). To this list can be added *quṭāt / ʿaṭāt* ‘equipment, gear, chattels, implements, etc.’.

Kofler 1940: 115–16 reports from Al-Suyūṭī’s *Muzhir* (fifteenth century) *taṣawwaq/ʿa* ‘to muddy oneself’, and (from Al-Karmalī 1903: 591) two other examples mentioned by lexicographers: *q/ʿafaz*, *istanṣaq/ʿa* (but not the last example quoted by Al-Karmalī: *muxranliq/ʿ*).

For Egypt, the three oldest examples known are: a medieval Judaeo-Arabic one (undated; Gottheil and Worrell 1927, xxxiii: 154, ll. 9–10, cf. Blau 1981: 76): תרָא *tarā* (for *taqrā*) and ירָא *yarā* (for *yaqrā*, which appears l. 11, with *q*) ‘you give my/he gives his greetings’, but according to Hopkins 2012: 61, n. 41, this example ‘falls away’<sup>25</sup> (he identifies the root as XŠŠ instead of QRY); a possible example in 1173: ʿAnbar (< ʿAnbar < Qanbar), quoted by Al-Karmalī (1903: 590–1); the mention, for the year 1289, by Al-ʿAbdarī (d. c.1320; cf. Grotzfeld 1967) of a man in Cairo who used to pronounce *qāf* and *kāf* as *hamza* (*yaḡʿalu al-qāf wa al-kāf hamzatan*).<sup>26</sup>

For the *Bilād al-Shām*, we have the example (an individual characteristic?) from the twelfth century (cf. Grotzfeld 1964: 14, n. 1 and 1967: 88) of the Damascene poet Ibn ʿUnayn (d. 1233) who wrote a four-verse poem (full of words with *qāf*) for a nephew of his ‘who pronounced the *qāf* defectively and realized it as *hamza*’ (*yaltāḡu bi-al-qāf wa yuxriḡuhā hamzatan*). For the same period, we can add in the *Kharīda* of Al-ʿIṣfahānī (d. 1201) an ironic passage (1968: 371–2) in the biographical notice of the Aleppine Ibn al-ʿAḡamī al-Ḥalabī (twelfth century), maybe also on an individual usage, which is nevertheless described as *latḡa ʿarmaniyya fī niḡārihi wa luḡa yahūdiyya min šīʿārihi* ‘a defective Armenian pronunciation and a Jewish way of speaking characteristic of him (?)’. Other examples are traceable in the Frankish toponymy of Lebanon: Cafrahael (= Kafr Qāhil), Bahaelin (= Baʿaqlīn) (Lentin 2012a: 77). For the Mameluke period, see for instance ʿAbū Shāma 1974: 225, 2 in a poem composed in 1262: ‘some of them *yaltāḡu bi-al-qāf*’; Zayyāt 1928: 15–16, from Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) quoting a hypercorrection (*mabḏūq* for *mabḏūʿ*). For the Ottoman period, I found (Lentin 1997: 105–6 (§3.12.3)) in a corpus of some 10,000 pages, apart from an indirect example like the proper noun *Ader = Chader* [= قَادَر], fourteen examples (three of which are not certain): *muʿaddirīn-hu* ‘considering him (as)’ (= *muḡaddirīn-hu*); *hallaʿ* ‘now’ (for *hallaq*); *al-bāʿiya* ‘which were left’

<sup>25</sup> It is also ‘unconvincing’ for Wagner (2010: 163–4).

<sup>26</sup> But the only example he gives is of *k* → *ʿ* in *labbayʿa* for *labbayka* ‘I wait intently upon Thy service!’ Also quoted by Taymūr 1971: 74–5, from the ms. 2218 *tārikh* p. 69. Also Talmon 2004: 217, n. 31.



(*al-bāqiya*); <sup>ʔ</sup>*abl* ‘previously’ (= *qabl*); <sup>ʔ</sup>*Ubruṣ* ‘Cyprus’ (= *Qubruṣ*); and nine (one uncertain) examples of hypercorrection: *masāqiluhu* ‘his problems’ (= *masāʔiluhu*); *kam qūḍa* ‘a few rooms’ (= *kam ʔūḍa*).

One could consider that the small number of doublets in OA, the late appearance of clear examples in the texts, the mention of apparently individual cases (the stigmatization of keeping [ʔ] when reading CLA aloud?), and the relatively reduced number of examples (and the more reduced number of hypercorrections) in MA texts from the Ottoman period do not speak for an early or generalized shift  $q \rightarrow ʔ$  in the Levantine dialects. One has nevertheless to bear in mind that: (a) such a shift must have been considered an established fact (as it is today), especially as [ʔ] was mostly an urban realization, usually sociolinguistically prestigious, and hence not stigmatized or likely to have been borrowed; (b) it was not normal to write it (as is still the case today, except for a marginal use of the notation of *qāf* with a superscript *hamza*), which should not surprise us, since it is common practice to avoid a number of typically colloquial features in writing, and to adopt an etymological spelling,<sup>27</sup> especially in MA (i.e. not colloquial) texts. As a matter of fact, the *hamza*—and the few hypercorrections—appear only in strongly colloquializing texts (and not, interestingly, in colloquial poetry manuscripts, for instance).

For all these reasons, it does not seem too bold to claim that the shift  $q \rightarrow ʔ$  took place earlier than is usually assumed. It is interesting to note in this context that, in the examples reported by the Arab lexicographers, it seems that we have two kinds of doublets:  $*q \rightarrow ʔ$  and  $*ʔ \rightarrow q$  (hypercorrection), which would suggest, for relatively early periods, a diverse dialectal landscape with *q* dialects and <sup>ʔ</sup>*q* dialects. On the other hand, since data about the age and historical extensiveness of this situation are completely lacking, one cannot be more specific.

It has already been observed that the presence of <sup>ʔ</sup> for *\*q* in some old Maghrebi dialects could point to an ancient feature imported there. But one must also remember that this feature, like other ‘sedentary’ ones (e.g. the shift interdental → dental) could very well have occurred independently in old urban dialects. It is also noticeable that in Cypriot Arabic—where *q* has merged with *k*—we have apparently no trace of  $*q \rightarrow ʔ$ .

#### 7.5.4 <sup>ʔ</sup>*imāla*

The term <sup>ʔ</sup>*imāla* is used here in its broadest sense, to refer to the fronting and raising of *\*ā* toward *ī* and of *\*a* toward *i*, whether they occur in Inlaut or Auslaut (medial or final <sup>ʔ</sup>*imāla*), in accented or unaccented syllables, etc.<sup>28</sup>

In some early undated inscriptions in Greek characters, ‘*\*a* is raised to [e] in unstressed pretonic syllables and only following the voiceless sibilant’. The only dated

<sup>27</sup> Let us not forget that writers and scribes were, by definition, literate and educated people.

<sup>28</sup> It is not possible to go into details here, in particular concerning the two main types of <sup>ʔ</sup>*imāla* found in contemporary and modern dialects (roughly: conditioned by the actual or former presence of *i* or *ī* in the syllable adjacent to *a/ā*, or by the consonantal environment, not to speak of morphological considerations). For a synthesis see, for instance, Levin 2007.

example (AD 411) is from Palestine: (Al-Jallad 2017a: §4.1.1.1) Σεουδα/sewdā/ (< \*sawdā) ‘black’. ‘Pre-tonic *a*-raising is relatively regular’ in a Petra papyrus (early sixth century?), ‘occurring in pretonic unemphatic environments, e.g.: Αλμεναμ/ al-menām/< \*al-manām; Βενι/ benī/< \*banī’ (same reference).

In the Damascus Psalm fragment,<sup>29</sup> the examples are very numerous (39 for \**a* → *e* and 11 for *ā* → *ē*) and show a well-integrated feature.<sup>30</sup> Some examples:

*a* → *e*: (verbs: the two s-stem patterns) φατεχ fateḥ (fataḥ) ‘He opened’/σεμυγ semiḥ (samiḥ) ‘(God) heard’, εσκεν <sup>2</sup>esken (<sup>2</sup>askan) ‘(the tent) He had set up’; (noun) βαχερ bašer (bašar) ‘humans’; (function words) article el- (al-), preposition le- (la-) ‘to, for’, conjunctions we (wa) ‘and’, <sup>2</sup>ew (<sup>2</sup>aw) ‘or’; λεγαλ le<sup>c</sup>al (la<sup>c</sup>alla) ‘maybe’; (f ending) χαμετ σ. xaymet (xaymat) s. ‘the tent (shrine) of S.’;

*ā* → *-ē*: γεβ ḡēb (ḡāb) ‘He brought’; ελιχεβ el-sihēb (al-sihāb < al-sahāb) ‘the cloud’; (final *ā*) ελαυγέ el-<sup>c</sup>awḡē (al-<sup>c</sup>awḡā) ‘slack (the bow)’.<sup>31</sup>

Whatever its earlier history,<sup>32</sup> <sup>2</sup>*imāla* seems already to have been an important phenomenon in pre-Islamic times, and to have had in early Islamic times a wide extension in Levantine dialects (including the ‘Lebanese’ dialects exported to Cyprus).<sup>33</sup> It must be observed that the phenomenon was present also in many other Iraqi, Egyptian and Maghrebi dialects, as clearly appears from various sources (including Sibawaih). For Iraq and/or Egypt, Judaeo-Arabic texts from the eighth to ninth centuries provide rich material.<sup>34</sup> Hopkins (2005: 210–11) comes to the same conclusions about the widespread use of the ‘Umlaut-*imāla*’ (i.e. of *ā* conditioned by adjacent *i*) ‘during the first centuries of Islam’, adding that ‘Since that time it has been in a process of continual eastward recessing’. One cannot but agree, although the domain of <sup>2</sup>*imāla* still covers a large area today.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*imāla* is well attested for various dialects in later texts. Breydenbach (end of fifteenth century): (*a* → *e*) rocube ‘knee’ (rukba), melack ‘angel’ (malāk), meleck ‘king’ (malik), szijmel ‘camel’ (žamal),<sup>36</sup> nežme ‘star’ (nažme), ganeme ‘sheep’ (ḡaname), telate ‘three’ (talāte); (*ā* → *ē*) kehem [sic] ‘priest’ (kēhen), behym ‘(big) toe’ (bāhim), esskeff (skāf /<sup>2</sup>iskāfi) ‘shoe maker/repairer’. The <sup>2</sup>*imāla* of the *a* of the f ending \*-a(t) is of course also attested for dialects that apparently do not know other types of <sup>2</sup>*imāla*, with distributions similar to that in contemporary dialects: Muth 2010 (fifteenth century) charfe ‘cinnamon’ (qirfa), huarache ‘sheet of paper’ (waraqe), but lacma ‘meat’ (lahme), bagla ‘mule’ (baḡle).<sup>37</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See references at n. 8.

<sup>30</sup> *e* and *ē* are of course conventional notations, and refer to intermediate vowels. For a quick analysis, see Hopkins 1984: §3a pp. 4–5 (*a*) and 7 pp. 8–9 (*ā*).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. also the <sup>2</sup>*imāla* of *ā* and *a* in one and the same word σέλετ sēlet (sālat) ‘(water) flowed’.

<sup>32</sup> For a tentative sketch (for the <sup>2</sup>*imāla* of *ā*) see Al-Jallad 2012: 278–81.

<sup>33</sup> See the detailed account by Borg 1985: 54–67 (and 155–7 for historical considerations).

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. Blau 2002: 136–54 for some texts.

<sup>35</sup> See, for instance, for Syria Behnstedt 1997a: map 33 (general) and maps 34–62 (*ā*) and map 68 (*-a*).

<sup>36</sup> For *i* in the first syllable see §2.

<sup>37</sup> A questionable example is Avishur 2008 (mid-sixteenth century): 102, v. 52: אלבילייה il-bilēyi? (\*al-balāya) ‘the calamities’.

In later Ottoman texts, examples are frequent:<sup>38</sup> *qdymy* (*quddēmī*) ‘front (adj)’ (Lebanon 1671), *trğmy* (*tarğame*) ‘translation’ (Aleppo 1764).

A different but related issue may be mentioned here: the reflex of word final \**ay*. In early documents, we find (feminine elative \**C<sub>1</sub>uC<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub>ay*) in a Petra papyrus (early sixth century?): *Αλσουφλη*/*al-sufley*/ (Al-Jallad 2017a §5.1.1) and, in a Nessana papyrus dated 684 *Μαυλε*/*mawlē*/ (Al-Jallad 2017b: §4.6).

Such forms are difficult to detect in Middle Arabic or colloquial texts, since *ȳ* (*y* / *ī*) often has the value of *ā* (*ā*, *ʔalif maqṣūra*). In late Ottoman texts, some common nouns derived from roots with 3rd radical w/y seem likely to have exhibited *ʔimāla* (patterns corresponding to CLA *C<sub>1</sub>a/iC<sub>2</sub>āʔ*): *kry* (*kire*) ‘rental fees; rent’, *šty* (*šite*) ‘winter’, ‘rain’, *šy* (*ʔiše*) ‘time of the evening prayer’; (other patterns) *ğdy* (*ğade*) ‘tomorrow’, *fry* (*fire*) ‘furs’, *qny* (*qine*) ‘canals’ (pl nouns).

### 7.5.5 PAUSAL PHENOMENA

Since the late 1940s, the works of Henri Fleisch on Lebanese dialects have drawn the attention of scholars to pausal phenomena (Fleisch 1974 *passim*) whose importance is still somewhat underestimated, although they have been identified in other dialects (Yemen, Egypt, Malta etc.). Despite a renewed interest in recent years,<sup>39</sup> these complex phenomena,<sup>40</sup> not always restricted to the last syllable of the word (cf. Retsö 1994: 103, 14–18), must have existed widely in Levantine dialects in early times—exactly like the *ʔimāla* which can probably be considered a particular case and/or relic of them. Pausal forms have been found in several Lebanese dialects (special mention must be made of the dialect of Ez-Zrēriyye,<sup>41</sup> which exhibits a rather complex system described by Aro (1978 and 1979)).<sup>42</sup> They also seem—in the present state of our documentation—to occur abundantly in the Anti-Lebanon dialects, including that of Jubb ʿAdīn (Correll 1972).<sup>43</sup> For Damascus, I tried to show (Lentin 1982) that many alternations between *-a* and *-e* found in Ottoman MA texts, as well as the anomalous distribution of these variants in various dialectal items today, are to be explained as the remnants of an ancient system of ‘lento/allegro’ forms.<sup>44</sup> Pausal/context forms are of course difficult to identify in written texts since the modifications involved (affecting mainly vowels) are generally not reflected in the spelling. Identifying such forms is nevertheless an important task of future research.

<sup>38</sup> Lentin 1997: 130–5 (§3.19.1; 132–3 for the *-a(t)* ending).

<sup>39</sup> e.g. (for Turkish Arabic) Arnold 2010a and Durand Zúñiga 2015.

<sup>40</sup> For a brief general account see Retsö 1994: 101–3 (with bibliographical references, for which see also Lentin 1982: 136–7, n. 1); for the Levant see Grotzfeld 1980: 179–80. For Syria, see Behnstedt 1997a: maps 65–7.

<sup>41</sup> In the neighbourhood of Deyr Qānūn, 40 kilometres south of Sidon.

<sup>42</sup> In two articles to which insufficient attention has been paid.

<sup>43</sup> As I have tried to show in Lentin 1982: 136–7, n.1.

<sup>44</sup> See Aro 1979: 29 (§2.1) for these terms.

## 7.6 PRONOUNS

### 7.6.1 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

#### 7.6.1.1 Independent pronouns

1pl: the dialectal form *niḥnā* is rather frequent in Middle Arabic texts, e.g. Bāshā 1972: 581, 8 (in a poem of the Damascene Ibn al-Suwaydī al-Ṭabīb (d. 1291));<sup>45</sup> Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 198,11; Al-Jbūr 2011: 2, l. 2 of the inscription (mid-fourteenth century); ʿAbū al-Faṭḥ, *Kitāb al-Tārīkh* (fourteenth century; Stenhouse 1989: 605, 1). For the Ottoman period, see Lentin 1997: 192. The form ʿiḥnā<sup>46</sup> is less frequent: Avishur 2008 (mid-sixteenth century): v. 49.

Pronouns for all persons occur rather frequently in Ottoman texts (Lentin 1997: 192–3): 2msg *ʿinte/a*, 2fsng *ʿinti*, 3msg *huwwē*, 3fsng *hiyye*, 2 com pl *ʿintu* (*ʿintun*), 3 com pl *hinne(n)*, هن *hn* (*hənn?*),<sup>47</sup> *humma*, هوين *hwyn*.<sup>48</sup>

#### 7.6.1.2 Bound pronouns: 3msg

\*-o/-u is the most frequently attested dialectal form. It is written in various ways (Lentin 2012b: 225–7 §3.9; Lentin 1997: 194–5 §5.1.2), mainly:

ه (h and a *ḍamma* (u) on the preceding consonant) is an old spelling (Blau (1966–7: 134 §31.1), for whom it is to be understood as -uh; Lentin 1997: 150–1 §3.19.5). A pre-Ottoman example is Bengtsson 1995: 129 (thirteenth century): اسمته *\*ismu(h)* ‘his name’.

wāw و (w), or even وا with *ʿalif al-wiqāya* (and sometimes also a *ḍamma* on the preceding consonant (وا), e.g. Bāshā 1972: 567–8: in a *muwašṣaḥ* by Shihāb al-dīn al-ʿAmshāṭī (d. 1324/1325), e.g. v. 5: ʿayš taṣīf xalqo ʿaw samāḥ kaffo ʿaw durar manṭiqo ‘what should you describe [in your verses], his beautiful figure, the munificence of his palm [his generosity] or the pearls of his speech?’.

In Gottheil/Worrell 1927: 32–3 (text VII, l. 4):<sup>49</sup> ʿlh (לה, \*ʿelo) wšdqh ‘to him and to Ṣadaqah’, the strengthened form of the prepositional phrase -lo indirectly points to an -o pronunciation.

In Ottoman texts, the well-known phenomenon in contemporary dialects: -V(< \*V̄) + -u (3msg pron) → -V̄ (e.g. Damascus *šāfu* + -o ‘they saw + him’ → *šāfū*) occurs: *law xabbā* (خبا for \*خبا *xabbāhu*) *taḥt al-ʿard* ‘even if he hides it under the ground’.

<sup>45</sup> Reported by Al-Taghribirdī (d. 1470) in *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi wa l-Mustawfi baʿd al-Wāfi*.

<sup>46</sup> Bergsträsser 1915: map 14; Behnstedt 1997a: map 255. A process like (Najdi Arabic) *ḥinn* + -nā > \**ḥnnā* > *iḥnā*, as proposed by Al-Jallad 2012: 294 for the formation of this form is questionable.

<sup>47</sup> Numerous examples in a text written in 1764 by the Aleppine Ḥannā Dyāb; cf. Barthélemy 1935–69: 875 (not in Behnstedt 1997a: map 257 for this region).

<sup>48</sup> See Arnold and Behnstedt 1993, map 30: *huwwin* (in Ṣadad and Il-Ḥafar); Behnstedt 1997a: map 257.

<sup>49</sup> If the text does not come from Egypt.

In one text (end of the eighteenth century, about whose author almost nothing is known) we find (Lentin 1997: 195) *ʔafandī-n-u* ‘his effendi’ and *ʕalay-n-u* ‘on him’.<sup>50</sup> These two examples by themselves do not allow us to decide whether this is an example of the well-known allomorph *-nu* of *-u* (See Procházka, this volume, §9.3.2.2.1) or of the infixing of an element *-n-*.

For 3fsng *-a* (instead of *-ha*) see Lentin 1997: 195–6, e.g. *wa xalf minnā* (for *wa xalf minhā*) ‘and behind her’; *wa yqūlū-l-ā* (for *wa yqūlū-l-hā*) ‘and they call her...’.

### 7.6.1.3 Bound pronouns 2 and 3 com pl: *\*-kon*, *\*-hon*

Knutsson 1974 (ms. from the fourteenth century): 116,-1/117, 10: seven examples of *-hon* and one of *-kon* (but ‘not very convincing, since they are all found in contexts that have facilitated the confusion of the masculine with feminine forms of the suffixes’).

*-hon*: Avishur 2008 (mid-sixteenth century): v. 17 (written הון-, *-hwn*); Al-Kutubī (d. 1363), *ʕUyūn al-Tawārīkh*: vol. 20 p. 44 والله لا ييدهن *waḷlāh lā y(?)ayyidhon* ‘may God not support them’.<sup>51</sup> Ottoman texts: numerous examples of *-hon* (and even, in a few cases, of *-on*: قالون *qālū-l-on* ‘they told them’; *-kon* is less frequent (Lentin 1997: 196–7).

## 7.6.2 DEMONSTRATIVES

For a reconstruction of the proximal and distal Levantine demonstratives, see Al-Jallad 2012: 330–5 and Magidow 2013 *passim*, especially chapters 5 (pp. 265–357) and 6 (pp. 358–420, cf. pp. 369–75 §6.2.1 ‘*hawla* dialects in the Levant’, with a discussion of Al-Jallad 2012) and p. 418.

com sng (adj) *ha-l-* Avishur 2008: v. 24 (mid-sixteenth century) v. 24 להל מכאן *la-hal-makān* ‘to this place’; numerous examples in Lentin 1997: 207–10, e.g. *ha-l-xaṭra* ‘this time’; *bidd-na nkibb ha-l-rizq* ‘are we going to throw these goods away?’.

msg *d/dā*, fsng *d/dī*, pl *d/dōl* must have been in use in the Levant: ʔUsāma ibn Munqid (d. 1188) uses *dā* twice (Schen 1973: 64); *dī* Avishur 2008: v. 45; Lentin 1997: 203–4. As a matter of fact, *dā/dī/dawl (dōl)* are still used (as attributives) in Ḥafir it-Taḥta, in Syrian Qalamūn (Behnstedt 1993: 77, c and 1997a: map 275). msg *haḍāk* ‘that’ Avishur 2008 (mid-sixteenth century): v. 61; *hadack* Breydenbach (end of fifteenth century) 2011; *dāk*, *haḍāk* (Lentin 1997: 205).

*hayda* (הידא), probably felt to be too dialectal, appears rarely in written documents (one example in a document dated 1816).

fsng Gottheil and Worrell 1927: 152, text XXXIII, l. 15: *hādī* (?) ‘this’; *dīk*, *haḍīk* ‘that’ (Lentin 1997: 205).

<sup>50</sup> See Feghali 1928: 376 for an apparently similar example with the preposition *ʕan* and 384 for an example with *ʕand*, both probably exhibiting a different element *-ayn-* (see Procházka 1993: 74 and 82).

<sup>51</sup> My reading (see Lentin 1997: 111).

pl ‘these’: *hawlik* Dick 1961 (tenth century): 124,-1 and 126, 10 (هوليك); *ha/āwli* Treiger 2016 (AD 772): 30 (هاولي); Sourdel et al. 2010 (early tenth century): 65, Arabic text l. 4 (هولي); Treiger 2014 (tenth century): 89–98 *passim* (هولي); Shehadeh 1989 (early twelfth century): 56, 11; 178, 1 (هولي). Ottoman texts: *hdwly* (*hadōle*), *hwdy* (*hawde*); *hwlyk* (*hawlik*), *hdwlyk* (*hadōlik*) (Lentin 1997: 206–7).

### 7.6.3 *ʔahada(n)* ‘SOMEONE’

Hopkins 1984: 167 §169a (late third century); Blau 1966–7: 327–8 (§223.1); Lentin 1997 §5.5.1: 216–18 (with other forms like *ḥadan* (حدن) and *ḥadd*). This is most probably the transcription of a dialectal form (cf. today forms such as *ḥadan* in numerous Levantine dialects).

### 7.6.4 *mīn* ‘WHO?’

Stenhouse 1989: 605, n. 56 (fourteenth century); Lentin 1997: 213. See Behnstedt 1997a: map 289.

## 7.7 MORPHOPHONOLOGY

### 7.7.1 C<sub>1</sub>AC<sub>2</sub>AC<sub>3</sub> AND C<sub>1</sub>IC<sub>2</sub>IC<sub>3</sub>S-STEM VERB TYPES

Hopkins (1984: §64b p. 68) considers the Psalm fragment forms *σεμικ* *semi*<sup>c</sup> and *χεβικου* *sebi*<sup>c</sup>*u*, versus *φατεχ* *fateh* (*fatah*) an early attestation of the C<sub>1</sub>iC<sub>2</sub>iC<sub>3</sub> versus C<sub>1</sub>aC<sub>2</sub>aC<sub>3</sub> type of opposition in the s-stem verb. But the *ε* of *σεμικ* and *χεβικου* is rather a realization of /a/ with *ʔimāla* (in a phonetic environment that does not prevent it).<sup>52</sup> In Ottoman texts, however, the verbal pattern C<sub>1</sub>iC<sub>2</sub>iC<sub>3</sub> is most probably attested in forms such as *اطلعتنا* *ṭli*<sup>c</sup>*na* ‘we went out’, *امشيت* *mšit* ‘I walked’, etc.<sup>53</sup>

### 7.7.2 *\*/a/ > /i/* (IN NOMINAL AND VERBAL MORPHOLOGY)

This shift might be early, but, by definition, does not appear in non-vocalized texts. The Psalm fragment has *ελσιχεβ* *el-siḥēb* (< *\*al-saḥāb*). For later periods, we find von Harff (fifteenth century) 1860:<sup>54</sup> *inhibit* (*in-nibīt* < *\*in-nabīd*) ‘the wine’, *villach* (*fillāḥ* < *fallāḥ*) ‘peasant’, *missa olchayr* (*misa* [< *\*masa*] *ul-xayr*) ‘good evening’, and probably *schymel* (*žimal* < *\*žamal*) ‘camel’,<sup>55</sup> and the verbal form *ena kilemtu* (*ana killamtu* < *\*kallamtu*) ‘I spoke to him’; Muth 2010 (fifteenth century): *michan* (*mikān* < *\*makān*) ‘place’.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Al-Jallad 2012: 354, n. 322. It is likely that *ιεκδιρ* ‘he can’ should probably not be considered an early example of *taltala* (Hopkins 1984: 5, §3b) and should be read *yaqdir* rather than *yiqrdir*.

<sup>53</sup> On the spelling of initial CC see Lentin 1997: 122–6 (§3.17.1).

<sup>54</sup> List on pp. 112–13; cf. Stumme 1914: 68.

<sup>55</sup> Although it has been interpreted as a plural, as well as *szijmel* in Breidenbach (end of the fifteenth century) 2011.

### 7.7.3 VOWEL SYNCOPE AND ‘DIFFERENTIATING DIALECTS’

A few pre-Islamic examples of syncope appear, in unstressed open syllables, in the Petra papyri: *Aρβαθ* /*xarbat* / < \**xaribat* ‘it was ruined’ (early sixth century), *δαργαθ* /*dargāt* / *daragāt* ‘steps, terraces’ (Al-Jallad 2017a: §4.2.6).

Again, a phenomenon such as this does not appear in non-vocalized texts. For later periods, we find von Harff (fifteenth century) 1860: *olla krym* (*Alla krīm* < \**ʔAlḷa karīm* ‘God is generous’), Breydenbach (end of the fifteenth century) 2011: *trick* (*trīq* < \**ʔarīq*) ‘way’; Seetzen 1854–9: I 10, 33 (in Laṭmīn near Mḥardi?) *Aib ala schuirrbak* (ʿ*ayb* ʿ*ala šwērbak*) ‘shame on your moustache [= shame on you]’. Muth 2010 (fifteenth century): *smach* ‘fish’ is probably a plural (it is actually translated ‘pisces’), and could thus be read *smāk* (< \**ʔasmāk*). In seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Ottoman texts, spellings such as انحاس *nḥās* ‘copper’, اجميع الناس *ʔmīʿ an-nās* ‘all the people’, رجال *rżāl* ‘men’, اضاف *nḏāf* ‘clean (pl)’ undoubtedly attest forms as they are transcribed here,<sup>56</sup> and thus the existence of ‘differentiating’ dialects (with \*/a/ more stable than \*/i/ and \*/u/) as opposed to ‘non-differentiating’ ones. But the incomplete picture we get from the sources certainly does not allow us to draw a precise map, all the more so because morphological facts are rather complex in that respect.

## 7.8 VERB MORPHOLOGY

### 7.8.1 DIALECTAL IMPERATIVES C<sub>1</sub>Ū/ĪC<sub>3</sub> OF C<sub>2</sub>w/y VERBS

These are attested early: Levin 1938 (ninth century) Mt 2, 13 *kūn* ‘be’; Monferrer-Sala 2005 (mid eleventh century): §5.13 *qūl* ‘say’. Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 210, 4 *sūq* ‘go ahead’; 219,–3 *qūl* ‘say’; 298,–5 *dīr-hu* ‘turn it’, shows the existence of *dār*, *yḏīr* ‘to turn (s’thing)’ (cf. CLA *ʔadāra*) as in most contemporary Levantine dialects.

### 7.8.2 DIALECTAL FORMS OF C<sub>3</sub>y verbs

These are frequent: ʔUsāma ibn Munqid (d. 1188) \**mašiyat* ‘(it/she) went’ (Schen 1973: 71); Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 196, 16, etc. *bəqyū* ‘they stayed’.

### 7.8.3 DIALECTAL PATTERN C<sub>1</sub>AYC<sub>2</sub>AC<sub>3</sub>

This is attested, e.g. Avishur 2008: v. 36, (mid-sixteenth century) *ṭayla* ‘to throw (out)’ (Feghali 1919: 195–6).

<sup>56</sup> For the spelling see n. 53.

## 7.9 AUXILIARY VERBS

Most of the auxiliaries used in contemporary dialects are attested in Middle Arabic texts, as the following examples show.

### 7.9.1 *qām* ‘TO GO (AND DO)’

See ʿUsāma ibn Munqid̄ (d. 1188), Schen 1973: 90, 15–21; Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 224, 3 and 5–6 *qām rāḥ* ‘he upped and left’. In Ottoman texts, this is the most used auxiliary. It means ‘to move/pass from one process to another (often quickly or suddenly)’ (in a narrative sequence); it is thus frequently associated with verbs of movement, such as *ġa* ‘to come, to arrive’ or *rāḥ* ‘to go (away)’, or used in the imperative (followed by a second imperative: 97, 3 *qūm rūḥ* ‘come on, go!’) (Lentin 1997: 644–6 (§14.8.2)).

### 7.9.2 حسن (\*ḥisin) ‘TO BE ABLE TO’

See Lentin 2012c: 232–3, with examples from the ninth century (Levin 1938: Arabic text 10, 6–7 (Mt. 7, 11) *ʿin kuntum . . . tiḥsinū tuʿtū banikum . . .* ‘if you . . . know how to give . . . to your children’) until the Ottoman period. Add Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 156, -7. See also §7.15.2.3.

### 7.9.3 ما فعل (\*fiʿil) ‘NOT TO AGREE TO’

See Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 367, -5 *wa mā kān yafʿal yuxabbir ʿaṣḥābahu* ‘and he would not inform his companions’ (Lentin 1997: 628 (§ 14.2.3); Barthélemy 1935–69: 615).

## 7.10 PREVERBS

### 7.10.1 THE *b(i)*- P-STEM

Much was written around 1900 about this preverb.<sup>57</sup> More recently, there has been renewed interest in it.<sup>58</sup> Since *b-/bi-/ba-* is attested not only in the Levant (including Cyprus), but also in the Arabian peninsula (Najd, the Gulf, Oman, Yemen), Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, and up to Libya (and, marginally, in Tunisia and southern Morocco), with various uses, and sometimes with various allomorphs for the different persons, there has been much speculation about whether or not these different

<sup>57</sup> Kampffmeyer 1900, ʿĀrāʾ al-ʿudabāʾ 1900, Glaser 1901, Nöldeke 1904. Scholars such as Landberg, Socin, Stumme, and M. Cohen subsequently expressed their views.

<sup>58</sup> Stewart 1998: 104–28 (especially 109–10), Rubin 2005: 145–51 (§6.6), especially 149–51 (§6.6.3), Eksell 2006a, Al-Jallad 2009a and 2012, Retsö 2014a and 2016, Owens, this volume, not to mention studies on specific (groups of) dialects.



forms share a common origin. Different theories have been proposed in relation to etymological hypotheses. But owing to the small number of early attestations of *b(i)-*, and to the reduction of its phonological form to a syllable at the most, which clearly speaks for its antiquity (as does the fact that it is always a bound morpheme, and can thus be labelled a prefix, in contrast to *‘ammāl*, for example),<sup>59</sup> all the etymologies and the historical reconstructions proposed are highly tentative.<sup>60</sup> Likewise, even if it is a challenging fact that Qatabanic has a *b-* p-stem (Beeston 1962: 24–5; Nebes and Stein 2008: 163; Avanzini 2009: 212–13; Retsö 2014a: 68–9), used ‘for indicative statements of the present and the future’ (Nebes and Stein 2008: 163; Avanzini 2009: 213: ‘to specify the present-future . . . , in relative clauses in particular’), the similarity to Levantine Arabic *b(i)-* is limited to this use. Moreover, any proposed connection between South Arabian and Arabic in this matter would have to be explained (Al-Jallad 2012: 366).

Any hypothesis about the origin and development of the *b(i)-* p-stem should build on the evidence provided by the texts, and on a sound analysis of the use of *b(i)-* and of its grammatical-semantic meanings. For the Levant, the available data point to modal uses of this form.<sup>61</sup>

The validity of the ninth-century example found in Levin 1938: 14, 3 (Mt 9, 28): *‘a tūminnā bi-‘annī baqdir ‘an ‘ašna‘ hādā* ‘do you believe that I am able to/could do this?’ (Blau 1966–7: 149 and 1981: 121, n. 1.) has been recently questioned.<sup>62</sup> One of the earliest records could thus be found in a work by the Karaite Salmon ben Yerūḥam (tenth century):<sup>63</sup> *badxul ‘ilā al-malik wa ‘ana šāyima wa ‘aḥmil ‘alā nafsi wa ‘uxāṭir bi-rūḥī* ‘for I will go in to the king while I am fasting, and I will take it

<sup>59</sup> Not to mention its presence in Cypriot Arabic, which takes us back at least to the twelfth century (and probably two or three centuries earlier than that).

<sup>60</sup> They vary from aphoretic forms of verbs such as *‘abā*, *baḡā* (‘to want’, ‘to wish’) etc. to the locative preposition *bi-* (or both if one postulates two different prefixes *bi-* and *ba-*, see n. 74; e.g. Kampffmeyer 1900: 38; Nöldeke 1904: 64; Cohen 1924: 64). In a recent proposition Al-Jallad (2009b, see also 2012: 366–8) supports the preposition hypothesis, but thinks that it first appeared through constructions like *\*mā hū bi-yešrab*, i.e. ‘tied to developments in the system of negation in Proto-Levantine Arabic’. Other proposed etymologies are far-fetched or unconvincing (e.g. the pseudo-verb *bidd-* ‘to want to’, Jarad 2012, 2013).

<sup>61</sup> It is not irrelevant (cf. §7.4) to make a note here about the Egyptian case. The views expressed by Wagner (2010: 163–75 (see p. 172 for a comparison with ‘Palestinian/Syrian’ use)), should be revised, because the Egyptian data they are based on and their chronology need to be reconsidered. It is difficult to agree with the statement (p. 171) that ‘The *bi-*imperfect starts to emerge in sub-standard writing in the twelfth century. The first sources to employ it are of Egyptian Judaeo-Arabic origin while it only appears in Muslim sources from the fifteenth century onwards’. Retsö (2016) also writes ‘The *b-*imperfect is documented for the first time in the twelfth century in Christian and Jewish Arabic texts’. As a matter of fact, we have early attestations in texts or documents written by Muslims, e.g. Diem 1995: 307, 38 (n° 47, twelfth century, commentary p. 316) *wa lā badrī* [بادري] *‘ayš* ‘and I didn’t know what [to write]’; Diem 1996: 63, 6 (n° 10, twelfth century) *bišir ‘ayš ‘ana fih* ‘whatever may happen with me’ and 83, -1 (n° 13, thirteenth century) *biqūl* ‘saying’. Cf. also the anonymous chronicle published by Zetterstéen (fourteenth century) and, from the same period, the chronicle of Ibn al-Dawādārī.

<sup>62</sup> By Wagner 2010: 163–4 for whom (among other arguments) it seems unlikely, for sociolinguistic reasons, that such a colloquial form should be put in the mouth of Jesus. One can nevertheless argue that *b(i)-* often occurs in reported speech and dialogues (as she herself observes on p. 168, commenting on a twelfth-century letter), and precisely with this auxiliary.

<sup>63</sup> Although it is not completely certain that he was born in Palestine.

upon myself<sup>64</sup> and put my life at risk' [on Esther 4:16]. For Judaeo-Arabic from the end of the twelfth century onwards, see Blau 1981: 121–2. Another early (undated) example is *fa-ʔin biḥill ʿalēk* 'if it is permitted to you' (Gottheil and Worrell 1927: xxiii, 152 l. 18; also quoted by Blau 1981: 65, n. 3). Two (also undated) examples from a letter of the Mameluke period read: *kān birīd yibʿaṭ xalfak* 'he wanted to send for you to come'; *wa ʔammā ʔanā bastahī ʔaqāblo*, 'but I don't dare to meet him'.<sup>65</sup> Other Mameluke examples are: Bengtsson 1995: 130, §3.3.5 (thirteenth century):<sup>66</sup> *ʔidā štarayt al-ḥaql byilzam tāxud ʔayḍan R.* (Ruth 4:5) 'if you buy the field, you will also have to marry R.' (my translation); Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 145, 18: *bitrūḥ twaddihā ʔilā* 'you shall go and bring it to...';<sup>67</sup> I 192,15: *al-sultān biʔammrak ʔan tasīr al-sāʿa* 'the Sultan commands you to go now...'; Al-Ṣafādī (d. 1363) 1989: I 18 n° 42: *gurr sīdī w lā tḍārib \* fa li-s-saqf barfaʿū* 'Stay behind and don't challenge [him], my Lord \* For I will/could lift him up to the roof' (my translation).<sup>68</sup> For later periods, see Muth 2010 (fifteenth century): *berid etchellem maa sciech labeled* 'I would like to speak to the *šayx al-balad* [the mayor]'; *embiro [ʔēn birūḥ]*<sup>69</sup> *tarich* 'Where does this way lead?'

Although very limited in number, these examples illustrate important aspects/uses of the *b(i)-* p-stem: they are all reported (direct) speech. Five of them are in the 1st person (modal or potential future, strong assertion), with one in an apodosis; two are in the 2nd person (with one in an apodosis), and four in the 3rd person (with one in a protasis); they all convey modality (e.g. injunctive, intersubjective).

In Baumstark 1908 (sixteenth century at the latest), *b-* occurs 58 times,<sup>70</sup> essentially in pseudo-direct speech addressed to the reader to describe various places: *btidxul* 'you enter', *btinzil* 'you go down', etc.

The picture is clearer for the Ottoman period.<sup>71</sup> The analysis of a large corpus of Middle Arabic texts, some of which are strongly colloquializing, shows that the *b(i)-* p-stem was then:

- (a) An eventive, punctual, pointing to the occurrence of the verbal process, always linked with a contextual point of reference or to the communication situation. As such, it often appears in descriptive or narrative passages. It is *not* a general imperfect: *b(i)-* indicates a modality, and commitment of the speaker/writer, which confers some kind of vividness to the utterance. It can thus be found after conjunctions such as *baʿd mā* 'after' and *qabl mā* 'before', *ʔawwal mā* 'as soon as' etc., after modal auxiliaries, especially meaning 'can, to be able', and in

<sup>64</sup> Rather than 'I will pull myself together' (Wechsler 2008: 246, n. 420).

<sup>65</sup> Al-ʿAsālī 1983: 274–5, ll. 12 and 15 of the Arabic text (n° 74); cf. Diem 1995: 316.

<sup>66</sup> The ms. is dated 1690, but very close to much older versions.

<sup>67</sup> Also quoted from the ms. by Taymūr (1971: 172).

<sup>68</sup> Taymūr (1971: 172) gives an example from Al-Kutubī's (d. 1363) *ʿUyūn al-Tawāriḥ: wa al-Tatar byaʿmalū ʔašgālahum*, but I have not been able to trace it in the current editions and I abstain from translating it.

<sup>69</sup> My reading (not identified by Muth, Anhang 2).

<sup>70</sup> In only seventeen pages out of twenty-seven, especially pp. 258 and 292 (ten examples each).

<sup>71</sup> Lentin 1997: 574–86, with over 100 examples, out of a corpus of 3,000 (half of which are found in one manuscript).

circumstantial clauses or qualifying relative clauses (to express a secondary process). In all these uses, the duration of the process is never taken into account: the *b(i)-* p-stem is *in no way a progressive form* (but it can be associated with the real progressive marker *‘ammāl*).

- (b) A ‘prospective’, and a modal future, used for instance after the p-stem or the active participle of *rāḥ* ‘to go’, ‘to be going to’, or in complement clauses as *mā ‘aḥad minhum kān yrīd ‘an bīṣir* ‘(something) none of them wished to happen’ (document dated 1748). It is especially used in hypothetical or concessive clauses (sometimes in the protasis, often in the apodosis—and thus rather often in both).

In some (Middle Arabic) texts, the *b(i)-* p-stem is used almost exclusively in reported speech (or writing, as in correspondences), for more or less modalized assertions in relation to the situation of enunciation, mostly after non-processive verbs such as *‘irif* ‘to know’, (*‘a*)*rād* ‘to want’, *qidir* ‘can’, *xāf* ‘to fear’, etc. It is also used to express the general present, the modal future, and the conditional but, as is natural in dialogues, very little as a descriptive or narrative. In texts where it also appears in narrative passages, it is mostly used as a narrative/descriptive, and its (modal) future use is marginal.

These observations suggest that, at that time, the *b(i)-* p-stem was more of a modal form than it is today,<sup>72</sup> as appears clearly from its frequent use as an expressive, emphatic, exclamative, etc. form (but *never* as a general present). This is already the case in Ibn al-Qilā‘ī’s *dīwān* (end of the fifteenth century). (See Lentin 1994: 307.) This use probably represents an intermediate step in a process which led from a ‘concomitant’ imperfect to a general imperfect.

To sum up, if attestations from earlier periods are too scanty, and centuries-old contacts and influences between dialects (and languages) too many, to allow any speculation on its ‘primitive’ form (and etymology), it can nevertheless be reasonably supposed from later periods that its meaning must have been, in early periods, strongly modal (perhaps a volitive/future) (see Owens, this volume and Holes 2016: 301–3).

As far as contemporary Levantine dialects are concerned, notwithstanding real (and often subtle) differences between dialects, the system can be outlined as follows.<sup>73</sup>

The *b(i)-* p-stem expresses everything that is non-perfective: actual, narrative/historical, general, or habitual present, and more or less modalized future, and potential. But it never refers to any temporal (initial or final) limit of the process (for most verbs, this function is fulfilled by the p-stem—with or without *b(i)*—preceded by *‘am(māl)*, which is a relative (concomitant) non-perfect and a ‘progressive’ form (the process takes place within an interval of time). The Ø-p-stem (without *b(i)-*) is a modal form.

<sup>72</sup> Where the *b(i)-* p-stem is the non-marked form of the imperfective (an indicative, as opposed to the form without *b(i)-*, the dependent (‘subjunctive’) form, see below).

<sup>73</sup> Taking the example of the Damascus dialect (for a detailed presentation of the *b(i)-* p-stem in this dialect see Salamé and Lentin 2010: 16–27).

From a historical perspective, the important point is that, in spite of its rapid evolution from a basically (up to recent times) modal form to a largely ‘demodalized’ form nowadays, the *b(i)-* p-stem has kept one of its modal functions, namely the expression of one kind of future ‘tense’. This holds true also for the Kormakiti Cypriot dialect, where the *p-* p-stem, essentially a general or durative present, ‘can express the future in the apodosis (and actually also in the protasis), when the supposition is presented as real... It can also have the value of an imminent future’ (Roth 1973–5: 98–9 (my translation)). These two facts also are good arguments in favour of the antiquity of *b(i)-*, but they do not throw sufficient light to trace, on a textual basis, the remote past of this prefix and earlier stages of its emergence. Nor can they help solve the question of a common or separate origin with the prefix *ba-*,<sup>74</sup> found, for instance, in the southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

One last issue has to be mentioned. The *b(i)-* p-stem is, in the Levant, characteristic of the ‘sedentary’ dialects. It is traditionally considered one of their hallmarks, and its presence in several ‘bedouin’ Levantine dialects in Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Negev, Sinai, in the western branch of north-west Arabian is thus attributed to the influence of ‘sedentary’ dialects spoken by villagers and townspeople (Palva 1991: 160) in the frame of a process of koineization. One may add that this type of ‘sedentary feature’ could be picked up ‘from one region and, in turn, influenc[e] a sedentary dialect of another region’ (Al-Jallad 2009b: 530). But the reason why the *b(i)-* p-stem should be an intrinsically ‘sedentary’ feature is puzzling and remains unexplained.<sup>75</sup>

### 7.10.2 ‘*ammāl*

This preverb is most probably more recent than the preverb *b(i)-* (Lentin 1994, especially §4). This is shown by the following facts:

- (a) Of the apocopated forms familiar today in the dialects, only one (‘*amma*’) appears, in two texts later than 1860, in the Ottoman corpus studied in Lentin 1997.<sup>76</sup>
- (b) In the earlier texts of this corpus, ‘*ammāl*’ seems to appear only in its ‘absolute’ uses, and always agrees then with its ‘subject’.
- (c) It is often separated from its verb.

<sup>74</sup> The old theory of a double origin (Kampffmeyer, Nöldeke, M. Cohen), which seems more likely, in particular because of the presence of both *bi-* and *ba-* in some dialects (South Arabia) with distinct functions, still has defenders (see e.g. Retsö 2016: 6 but, for a different point of view, Holes 2016: 301–3). But it can be based neither on the difference in form nor on a supposed difference in function (present versus volitive, e.g. Retsö 2016) which—in my opinion—is far from being clearly attested, the more so as the ‘present’ can very well derive, historically, from an original volitive, as we have seen for Levantine. Other scholars support the hypothesis of a common origin (for recent examples see Eksell 2006a and Owens, this volume). Note that particular cases such as the (Yemenite) paradigms with *bayn-* could either indicate a reshaping or point to a third ‘origin’; etc.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Macdonald’s remark quoted at n. 23.

<sup>76</sup> Another preverb appears (marginally) in the corpus: *man*. For the area of use in today’s Syria of ‘*ammāl*’ compared to other similar preverbs (*ma*, ‘*an*’, *qā’id* etc.), see Behnstedt 1997a: map 161.

Example of the ‘absolute’ use: Ibn Ṭawq 2002 (fifteenth century): 864,-8: *wa walīmat ṭuhūr ʿawlād Ibn Šahlā ʿammāla* ‘while the circumcision celebration of I.Sh.’s sons was in full swing’; example of *ʿammāl* separated from its verb: Wetzstein II 702 (seventeenth century):<sup>77</sup> ف 107 v -2: *ʿammālīn al-mubayyidīn yaštaḡilū fihim* ‘the tinsmiths are busy tinning them’.

*ʿammāl* refers to the process as it takes place, ‘at work’, in its progress (its durative or frequentative meanings are nothing more than derived meanings). It is often used to refer to a secondary/concomitant process. The process described in its progress is linked to more or less precisely defined circumstances, from those of the situation of enunciation (it is then an ‘actualizing’ form) to circumstances spread over a longer period of time, in the present or in the past (progressive meaning), or even to much more vaguely defined circumstances (Lentin 1994 and 1997: 586–96 (§12.2)).

For various reasons, *ʿammāl* + p-stem can lead to a general imperfect, more or less as in the case of the *b(i)-* p-stem. That is what happened, for instance, in some Lebanese dialects. But historically, the meeting of these two imperfects first led to various systems, according to the degree of ‘demodalization’ reached by the *b(i)-* p-stem (Lentin 1994: 310–13), and eventually led to their association in most of the dialects (*ʿammāl* + *b(i)-* + p-stem).

It is worth noting that *ʿammāl* is found today outside the Levant, with clearly related meanings/functions, not only in Egypt (Woidich 2006a: 282, §5.7.1.5) but also in the Maghreb, at least in Tunisia: (Marāzīg) *ʿammāl (uhū) yekṭeb* ‘he never stops writing’ (Boris 1958: 419); in Taktūna, it can be followed by a p-stem, an active participle, or a prepositional phrase, and can be separated from the verb. It can also be associated with *māš(i)*: *māš(i) ʿammāl* ‘to be preparing for’ (Marçais and Guïga 1958–61: 2708–9, see also one example on p. 3721).

### 7.1.1 EXISTENTIAL PARTICLE *fī*

Besides the (‘bedouin’) *bī/bo(h)/bū* etc., *fī* ‘there is’ is the main ‘existential particle’ in the area. In ʿUsāma ibn Munqid (d. 1188) we read:<sup>78</sup> *mā fī ḥādā yasriq raḡif xubz min baytihi* ‘this man has not got it in him [to] steal a loaf of bread from his own home’. Hitti (1930) adds (n. 38): ‘āmmiyya’ (‘colloquial’) and translates: ‘[a man of whom] no one who ever saw him could say he was capable of stealing even a loaf of bread from his own home’. Derenbourg in his 1886 French translation and Schumann in his 1905 German translation also understand *fī ḥādā* as ‘this man can’. But—unless we suppose that the construction was originally *fī* + noun, whereas we find either in Ottoman texts (Lentin 1997: 631 §14.3.5) or in contemporary dialects only *fī* + suffixed personal pronoun—it is likely that we have here an early example of the existential particle and that the sentence means: ‘it cannot be that’, ‘by no way this man...’ (Landberg 1888: 13 in his review of Derenbourg, although referring to a

<sup>77</sup> I thank Francesca Bellino for drawing my attention to this manuscript.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Munqid, ed. Hitti 1930: 45, 8–9 = 58, 7–8 of the 1981 Beirut reprint; Schen 1973: 91.

proverb in Landberg 1883: 12, 10 [actually 112, 1], correctly translates (my translation) ‘there is no way this man is a thief’ and adds ‘it is a quite Syrian locution’. An early sixteenth-century source gives *memphis flux* (*ma fiš flūs*) ‘there is no money’, for the Negev (Bacqué-Grammont 1998: 138; see Lentin 2012a: 78, n. 5).

𐤔𐤕 *šam* ‘there’ (cf. Ar. *šamma*) is used by some Judaeo-Arabic authors in the sense of ‘there is’, and has long been analysed as an Arabism. According to Schlossberg 1987, Yoseph Qaro [b. 1488 in Toledo, but moved to Šafad in 1539, where he died in 1575], commenting, in his *Kesef Mishneh*, on the first sentence of the *Mishne Torah* of Maimonides [b. 1135 in Cordoba, d. 1204 in Egypt], refers to Levantine *fī* in his observations on 𐤔𐤕 𐤕 *yeš šam* ‘there is’, ‘there exists’ [a god].<sup>79</sup>

On the other hand, the example in Ibn Wāšil (from Ḥamā, d. 1298) 2004: 222, 15, *mā fy rağā*, is probably to be read *mā fiyya rağā* ‘I had no more hope’ (and not ‘there was no hope’). For Ottoman examples see Lentin 1997: 233–7 (§6.2.1.1).

## 7.12 CONJUNCTIONS

### 7.12.1 *lamman* / *lammin*

This does not seem to appear in written form as 𐤋𐤍 in Ottoman texts before the eighteenth century. It is nevertheless probable that 𐤋𐤍 was a way to note *lamma/in* before that date (Lentin 1997: 417–18 (§8.5.1.1)). This late appearance in a corpus is probably a coincidence, since the spelling is attested earlier: Diem 1995: text 18 (eleventh century) exhibits, l. 16, 𐤋𐤍 (cf. comment p. 93 with references, but 𐤋𐤍 is found in text 44 (second half of the twelfth century or beginning of the thirteenth century) v. 16,<sup>80</sup> cf. comment p. 257; Avishur 2008 (mid-sixteenth century): v. 12, 20, 35 𐤋𐤍 *lmy*).

### 7.12.2 *ta* ‘IN ORDER TO’

*ta* is often explained as < *hattā*. Al-Jallad (2012: 325–8 (§4.1.4.1.1) on reflexes of *\*tay* in Proto-Levantine Arabic) proposes<sup>81</sup> a historical reconstruction which can be summarized as: relative *\*tay* (? > demonstrative) > conjunction introducing purpose clauses. However that may be, the function of *ta*, whether in early examples or in the contemporary dialects, was/is actually to introduce purpose clauses, but it must be added that it also changed rather early to a consecutive marker, and then, as in some Lebanese dialects in particular, to a discourse marker.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Quoted here after the short notice in *Annotated bibliography on Ezra* p. 25: <http://tmcdaniel.palmerseminary.edu/Ezra%20Bibliography.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> Not ‘r16’ (to be corrected in Diem 1995: 93).

<sup>81</sup> Referring particularly to the case of the Cypriot Arabic relative and future marker *ta*.

<sup>82</sup> See Blau 1966–7: 516, n. 20 for some references on the development of colloquial *ta* introducing utterances.

Al-Jawālīqī (d. 1144) 1875: 145, -2<sup>83</sup> mentions the use of *ta*: *ǧʾtu tā* (تَا) *ʾalqāka yurīdūn ḥattā ʾalqāka* ‘I came to (*tā*, they mean ‘*hattā*’) find [meet] you’. Muth 2010 (fifteenth century) *andec ta naquol scei* (ʿ*andak ta nākol šay?*) ‘do you have something we could eat?’. In Ottoman texts, *ta* (written تَا or تَا) can introduce not only purpose clauses but also completive clauses after various verbs: ‘to ask, beg for’ (*saʾal, ṭalab ta*), ‘to decide to’ (*iʿtamad ta*), ‘to allow to’ (*samiḥ ta*), ‘to wait until’ (*istanna ta*), etc. It can also have the meaning ‘as soon as’, ‘until’, or introduce a complete utterance or the main clause, e.g. *baʿd ta nuxabbir al-ḥukūme* ‘it remains to us to inform the authorities’ (early eighteenth century), *ta ʾaqūm maʿakum ʾuʿāwinkum* ‘[all right] I’m going to help you’ (mid-eighteenth century) (Lentin 1997: 379–80, 388–9, 408, 422–3, 457–8).

## 7.13 GENITIVE PARTICLES

### 7.13.1 *btāʿ* AND *mtāʿ*

Their use is not restricted to the Levant, but these two particles are well attested in the region.<sup>84</sup>

*btāʿ* (probably < *mtāʿ*, see e.g. Blau 1981: 82) is found mainly in Palestine (Eksell Harning 1980: 50–1), but also in Syria;<sup>85</sup> Barthélemy 1935–69: 28 (Jerusalem), 777 (in some parts of ‘Central Syria’), Salamé and Lentin 2010: 24–5 (Damascus); for Cowell (1964: 490) it is used in some regions of Lebanon and Palestine. For Šabbāgh (1886: 50), *btāʿ* is Egyptian and corresponds to the *mtāʿ* of *Bilād al-Shām*.

*mtāʿ* (attested as early as the twelfth century in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus) is found in the modern dialects of the Levant: Eksell Harning 1980: 51, Barthélemy 1935–69: 777, Feghali 1928: 208–9.

In the Ottoman texts, the few examples available show that, until recent times, *mtāʿ* was more a ‘nom de possession’ (in Barthélemy’s wording) than a genitive particle, meaning often ‘inhabitant of such and such a village or town’.

Further documentation is needed to get a clear picture of the history of these two particles in the region.<sup>86</sup> Their history is long, since we have early attestations for both of them: Diem 1995: text XXIII (eleventh century), r 12 (p. 114) *wa l-qamiṣ btāʿak* ‘and your shirt’; text XXV (fourteenth century) r 10 (p. 123) *ṭaman al-qisṭ mtāʿ (i)bn...* ‘the amount of the share of Ibn...’; Diem 1996: 96, 3–4 (text XXV, fourteenth century) *al-mindil mtāʿnā* ‘our head kerchief’.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted by Nöldeke (1904).

<sup>84</sup> For a clear account, see Germanos 2009: 248–86 (part 3, chapter 2). See also Eksell Harning 1980, Lentin 1997: 746–7 (*btāʿ*) and 747–8 (*mtāʿ*).

<sup>85</sup> It does not appear on map 240 in Behnstedt 1997a.

<sup>86</sup> And to confirm or disprove the generally accepted opinion that they go back to western *mtāʿ*.



7.13.2 *tabaʿ*

Some examples in Shehadeh 1989 (early twelfth century) are particularly interesting, because they document an early stage of the semantic evolution of this particle: 102, 180: Gen. 24, 8 *wa ʔin lam tahwā al-imraʿa li-l-masīr tabaʿak* ‘But if the woman is not willing to follow you’; 37, 17 *wa maḍā Yūsuf tabaʿ ʔixwatihi* ‘So Joseph went after his brothers’. In these examples, *tabaʿ* is still close to the meaning of ‘following’ (*tabiʿa* etc.) and can probably be translated ‘behind, following you’, ‘behind them / following in their footsteps’. In later (Ottoman) texts, it has taken figurative meanings ‘follower, supporter of’, ‘dependent on’, ‘attached to the service of’, ‘coming under’, ‘in accordance with’ etc., but the meaning ‘belonging to’, which is an unsurprising semantic development, seems to have emerged later, especially in its abstract use (‘of’).

7.13.3 *dēl/dīl*

This particle, used today mainly in Anatolian dialects (*dēl(a)* / *dīl(a)*), has been reported for some Levantine dialects: Syrian<sup>87</sup> (Barthélemy 1935–69: 261), Jordanian (Cleveland 1963: 62), Palestinian. Its presence in Cypriot Arabic (*tel*) strongly suggests that it is old and must have been more widely used in the Levant than today, as does its occurrence in Ottoman texts.

*dēl* is generally analysed as *dī-al* (or *dī-la*), i.e. an aggregation of deictic elements, and often compared to Neo-Aramaic *dīl* (see Al-Jallad 2012: 227 n° 9 and (328–)329 where he observes that ‘the presence of the word-initial interdental in the Arabic suggests that it is a native construction, perhaps formed under the influence of Aramaic but not directly borrowed’). An alternative etymology, sometimes suggested (Barthélemy 1935–69: 261) but generally rejected is Arabic *ḍayl* ‘lower end, tail, border of a garment’, which would mirror the semantic developments attested for *tabaʿ*.<sup>88</sup>

7.13.4 *šīt/šēt*

The same considerations apply to *šī/ēt* (< \**šay* + *-t* or < \**šiya*<sup>t</sup> [WŠY] ‘colour’, cf. Nöldeke 1897: 173). For the present situation see e.g. Palva 2008b: 65 and nn. 69–72 with references. *šīt* and *šīyyit* are well attested in Syria (Behnstedt 1997a: map 249), where it survives in certain dialects as a relic, e.g. Damascus *šīt-ak* ‘yours, belonging to you’ (polite use) and especially ‘your sexual organs’ (euphemistic/familiar use).<sup>89</sup> *šēt* seems to have been prevalent in Palestine. It is still used in a number of dialects

<sup>87</sup> It is absent from Behnstedt 1997a: map 249.

<sup>88</sup> For a completely opposite opinion, see Eksell 2009: 37. The two types of analysis also apply to Moroccan Arabic *dyāl* (see also Aguadé, this volume, §2.7.8.3).

<sup>89</sup> Lentin 2009: 164. This meaning is also attested in some non-Levantine dialects.



(e.g. Jaffa) but receding in others, e.g. Jerusalem (Durand 1996: 201). Cypriot Arabic has *šayt-* / *šat-*. An early attestation is found in González 2005 (early eighteenth century): II 150,-5/-4 (Grammatical part): *šayy* (*šayyi?*) ‘to me, mine’, *šayhu* (*šayyo?*) ‘to him, his’, *šayta* ‘to her, her’. For other examples from the Ottoman period see Lentin 1997: 751–2 (§17.8.6).

## 7.14 ADVERBS

### 7.14.1 *hayk(e)* / *hēk(e)* ‘SO, THAT WAY’

This adverb seems to be proper to the Levantine dialects (including ‘bedouin’ dialects, which have *hič*) (Fischer 1959: 140–2). An early example could be Gottheil and Worrell 1927: 152, text XXXIII (undated), l. 22 *hyk*. The Egyptian Al-Maghribī (1968) writes in 1606 (f° 63a, 12) *wa yaqūlūna wa hum al-š(a)wām hayk yurīdūn kaḏālika* ‘They—the *Shwām* [the people of the Bilād al-Shām]—say *hayk* for *kaḏālika* [“like that”]’.<sup>90</sup> For numerous Ottoman examples of *hayk* / *hēk* (and variants *hayke* / *hēke* (*hyky/hykh*) see Lentin 1997: 485–8.

### 7.14.2 *hwny* (*hawne/hōne*) ‘HERE’

This is attested for Syrian speakers by the Egyptian Ibn al-Dawādārī (fourteenth century) 1960: 199, 16 من هوني *mn hwny* ‘from here’. González 2005 (early eighteenth century): II 394 (Lexical part): *hawn*, *hawne* (هوني). Although not very frequent in the texts from the Ottoman period, it appears in various texts (letters, a poem) in the early seventeenth century and is also reported for the mid-nineteenth century by western Arabists (Lentin 1997: 477).

### 7.14.3 *ham(m)* ‘ALSO, AGAIN’ (< PERS.)

This appears in Shehadeh (early twelfth century) 1989: 232, 4 *wa ʿanā ʿuṣʿiduka ham ṣuʿūdan* ‘and I will also surely bring you up again’ (Gen. 46, 4). This borrowing had been condemned by Al-Jawālīqī (d. 1145) 1875: 146, 2 *wa qawluhum fī mawḏiʿ ʿayḏan hamm* ‘and they say *ham* instead of *ʿayḏan* [“also”]’,<sup>91</sup> and before him by Al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122) in his *Durrat al-ḡawwāṣ*.<sup>92</sup> For Aleppo, Barthélemy 1935–69: 872 and Al-ʿAsadī 1981–8: vol. 7, 365 mention only *ham(m)*...*ham(m)* ‘not only...but (also)’, whereas *ham* is widely used until today in Iraq (Blanc 1964: 158) and in eastern Arabia (Holes 2001: 545).

<sup>90</sup> For the other ‘Levantinisms’ quoted by this author see Lentin 2012a: 90.

<sup>91</sup> He adds: *wa fī mawḏiʿ ḥasbin bass* ‘and *bass* instead of *ḥasbin* [only]’. On this adverb (also borrowed from Persian) in Ottoman texts see Lentin 1997 §9.4.1.1.

<sup>92</sup> Al-Ḥarīrī 1871: 183; see also Thorbecke’s *Introduction* p. 48.

## 7.15 LEXICON

## 7.15.1 COLLOQUIAL WORDS IN MIDDLE ARABIC TEXTS

Lexical differences among Arabic dialects are as old as the language. Some of them have drawn the attention of lexicographers over the centuries (although they were more interested—for obvious reasons—in earlier differences with *luġāt al-ʿarab*).<sup>93</sup>

Texts, especially those written in Middle Arabic, abound in colloquial words and phrases. Only a few examples can be given here.

Very common verbs (not proper to the Levant) are attested in early periods (and occur very frequently in later ones): *ġāb* ‘to bring’ is already found in the Psalm fragment: Violet 1901: v. 29 (γ€β) or in Al-Ghazzī (tenth/eleventh centuries) 1984: 264 n° 7, and later e.g. in Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 144, 12; 197, 16 etc.; *šāl* ‘to take away’<sup>94</sup> also occurs in Al-Ghazzī (tenth/eleventh centuries) 1984: 264 n° 7, then e.g. in Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: I 223, 9 and 10. For (more, but not exclusively) ‘Levantine’ verbs, one can quote *qišīʿ* ‘to see’:<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Qilāʿī (d. 1516) 1982: last strophe, v. 6 (*qušūʿ*); *ftakar* ‘to remember’: Al-ʿIbshihī (d. c.1446) 1981: 481, 13); *ʿazam* ‘to invite’ Ibn Ṭawq (d. after 1509) 2004 (vol. 3): 1220, 8.

Some nouns: *balša* ‘extortion; extorted money’, Jabrī 1971: 461, 11–20 (Mameluke period); *šaqfa* ‘a piece (of s’thing)’, Al-Maghribī 1968 (written in 1606): 26b 7 *šaqfa wa al-Š(a)wām yastaʿmilūnahā bi-maʿnā al-qitʿa* (*šaqfa*: the people of Šām use it in the sense of ‘piece’).<sup>96</sup> The use of *\*rižžāl* ‘man’ is documented in the same text (75a, 13); *kutubiyya* ‘book shelf’ appears in a manuscript (author from Jerusalem, late eighteenth century; Al-Ṭibāwī 1981: 140, 8), as well as *ʿūda* ‘room’, extremely frequent in Ottoman texts, as are also dozens of other borrowings from Turkish.

*kayyis* ‘good (man)’ is found in Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) 1998: III 721, 15, and reported in von Harff (fifteenth century) 1860 (list on pp. 112–13): *chayesch* ‘beautiful’ (‘schoyn’) and Breydenbach (end of the fifteenth century): 279 of the 1486 edition (*cayess* ‘pulcrum’ [beautiful]). It is interesting to note that today (cf. WAD III: maps 394b and 395a) the word is ‘Levantine’ and ‘Egyptian’ with the meaning of ‘good’, but apparently not used in Egypt with the meaning of ‘beautiful’. For Syria, Behnstedt (1997a: map 351) gives the two meanings (‘gut/schön’); *kayyis* (versus *kwayyis*) is restricted to a rather narrow area (between Kasab in the north and the south of Tartus), to a much smaller one in central Qalamūn, and to a few scattered places.

<sup>93</sup> I have collected, from various sources and different periods (Lentin 2012a: 82ff.) over 120 words or expressions (labelled *luġat ʿahl al-Šām*, *luġa šāmiyya*, etc.), taken mainly from Ibn Durayd’s *Jamhara* (ninth or tenth century) and Ibn Maḏḏūr’s *Lisān al-ʿArab* (early thirteenth century). They need not be repeated here.

<sup>94</sup> For modern dialects see WAD III: map 379a.

<sup>95</sup> Known in Egyptian Middle Arabic, and also used today in the Egyptian oases (WAD III: 335, maps 362b and 363a). See also Procházka, this volume, §9.3.1.4.

<sup>96</sup> For details on the use of this word, including figurative meanings, see Lentin 1997: 308–9.

## 7.15.2 'LEVANTINE' WORDS

Thanks to the *Wortatlas* (WAD) of Behnstedt and Woidich it is now possible to get a fairly good idea of the modern (some of the data used dating back a century) and contemporary situation, and a picture of the geographical distribution of a large set of lexical items. For our concerns here, it is especially useful to be able to determine, with a reasonable margin of error, which items can be considered, with a high level of probability, 'Levantine'. Since the maps do not really provide insights into historical processes, especially inside a single area, we have of course to be careful about the inferences we draw. The maps can nevertheless be considered, to a certain extent, informative on a transregional level.

## 7.15.2.1 Widely shared Levantine items

Some words seem to be shared by Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Jordanian dialects (sometimes with 'peripheral' dialects such as those of Cilicia or Cyprus), and only by them: this is true, for example, of *xityār* ('old man', WAD I 16), *tumm*, *tamm*, etc. ('mouth', I 47), *durrāq(in)*, etc. ('peaches', I 174), *qannīne* ('bottle', II 219), *mašāri* ('money', II 287), *frāṭa* ('change', II 288), *kāziyye* ('petrol station', II 304), *kazdar* ('to take a walk', III 315), *qawwas*<sup>97</sup> ('to shoot (fire-arm)', III 354), *flēfle* ('chilli) pepper', ('sweet) pepper', II 249), *ʔarḍ* ('field', II 261).

## 7.15.2.2 Items shared within one area

Some words are found in one (territorially continuous) part of the Levant only: *mağrafa* and *qaddūm* ('hoe', WAD II 264a), *dūlāb* ('tyre', II 301), *barrād* ('refrigerator', II 205), *ḥardōn* ('lizard', I 124), *xōx* ('plums', I 173), *ʿidde/ʿūd/šumd* ('plough', II 266a), *bāyke/yāxūr* ('cowshed', II 275), *falaḥ* ('to plough', II 279), *ʔawāʿi / mawāʿin* ('clothes', II 231), *farḡa*, *warḡa*, *ʔarḡa* ('to show', III 365, and a few places in Egypt); the (geographical) domain of a word can be very small: *zaʿūma* ('throat/gullet', I 48b), *dēʿa* ('village', II 190, also present in Anatolia and Cilicia, and in Cyprus). The 'pseudo-auxiliary' *fīni*, *fik*, etc. ('to be able to', III 389a) is also limited to a part of Syria and Lebanon (and Antiochia etc. and Cilicia).<sup>98</sup>

## 7.15.2.3 Items shared with neighbouring areas

On the other hand, the use of other words extends a little beyond the limits of the Levantine area to encompass parts of neighbouring areas: (and Sinai) *bubbu / bāba* ('baby', I 19), *šawb / šōb* ('heat', I 145) and *šōb* ('hot (weather)', III 407a); (and some places in Arabia) *šurma / šurmāye* ('shoe', II 232b); (and Iraq) *saʿdān* ('monkey',

<sup>97</sup> Or rather *qawwaš*.

<sup>98</sup> A loan translation of Aramaic *ʔīl b-* (there is in) according to Borg 2004: 52 (see Procházka, this volume, §9.3.3.1 in *fine*).

I 132), *ballaš* ('to begin', III 349); (and part of Sudan) *ban(a)dōra* / *bandūra* ('tomatoes', I 158). This is not really the case of *ḥisin* ('to be able to', III 389b; see §7.9.2), basically 'Syrian' (and Antiochia etc. and Cilicia); its presence in what is now Saudi Arabia is documented—in 1868—by Wetzstein from bedouins in the 'Syrian steppe'.

#### 7.15.2.4 Items shared with Egypt

In apparent contradiction to what has been said in §7.4 about the dialectal links between the Levant and Egypt, there are only a few words which are shared solely by these two areas, e.g. *mīḏana* ('minaret', II 185), or mainly by only them, e.g. *zammūr* etc. ('horn', II 294), *fāṣal* ('to bargain', II 284), *ṣaḥḥād* ('beggar', I 28). However, many other words are shared by them and neighbouring areas. An interesting case is the well-known pseudo-auxiliary *bidd-*, *badd-* ('to want', III 391b), which is found in the western fringe of the region but also extends to the east of the Nile delta as well as to Mecca and to some places in Yemen.

This and, more generally, the fact that a much larger number of 'Levantine' lexical items are shared with larger areas evidently shows the presence of an important inherited 'Arabic' lexical stock in the Levant. This is an invitation to further research on when and how, on one hand, 'local' lexical items appeared, and, on the other, how they eventually spread.

#### 7.15.2.5 *maʿlēš*

The very common expression *maʿlēš* (written—in *karšūnī*—*mʿ lyh šy* ما عليه شي 'it doesn't matter' (lit. 'there is nothing (wrong) about it') occurs in the first volume of the *Codex liturgicus* published in 1749 by J. A. Assemani, 'certainly reproduced from the 1537 manuscript, and perhaps under the pen of Bar Hebraeus in the thirteenth century' (Lonnet 2012: 277, my translation).

## 7.16 THE ARAMAIC SUBSTRATE

### 7.16.1 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Like the rest of the Near East, the Levant witnessed the arrival of a multiplicity of languages and dialects, Semitic and non-Semitic, some of which coexisted for long periods, before and after the Arab conquests. For Arabic speakers, whether already settled or new incomers, these languages, and particularly the multiple varieties of Aramaic,<sup>99</sup> played, depending on place and period, the role of an adstrate or of a substrate language. These two different situations could not but influence Levantine Arabic, as is shown by the large number of lexical borrowings in the region.<sup>100</sup> This is

<sup>99</sup> The case of Greek will be left apart here.

<sup>100</sup> See e.g. Bassal 2012, 2013, 2015; Contini 1999: 111–16; Feghali 1918 (cf. Cohen 1920); Halayqa 2009; Hobeyka 2011 (and Hopkins 1995 for a Canaanite substrate word). For lexical Aramaisms in 'bedouin'

manifested, for instance, in an indirect way in early Christian Arabic writings,<sup>101</sup> probably reflecting a transitory situation. However, this influence should perhaps not be overestimated, at least from the period of the conquests onwards.<sup>102</sup> If Arabic was not necessarily then in the position of the dominant language, it was certainly not in the position of the ‘dominated’ one. One has only to think, again as indirect witness of the truth of this, of the Arabisms in Aramaic literature (or even, for earlier times, in Nabataean Aramaic). It is also interesting to note that the three surviving western Neo-Aramaic dialects in Syria seem to be more influenced by Arabic than are the Arabic dialects of the same bilingual speakers by Aramaic. That said, Arnold and Behnstedt (1993) have convincingly shown that the closer one gets to the Aramaic-speaking core in Syrian Qalamūn, the more the ‘Aramaic substrate isoglosses’ (e.g. \*ā > ō/ē, unaccented V̄ > V) become concentrated. This could be related (as suggested by the authors, p. 92) to the long-term presence in this area of a (predominantly Aramaic-speaking?) Christian population—that is, to a particular situation. It would otherwise be difficult to explain why the ‘Aramaic’ features should have receded elsewhere (by a kind of improbable ‘de-aramaization’). In any case, it remains to be explained why the features which are generally thought to be due to Aramaic substrate in the (sedentary) Levant as a whole should, except for a few cases, turn up in certain areas only.

Whatever the case may be, the Aramaic substrate has often been invoked to account for various linguistic features of Levantine Arabic.<sup>103</sup> In his 1979 article, Diem provided a balanced evaluation of the proposals that had been made hitherto in that regard, of which he retained only a few (Diem 1979: §§30–6 pp. 43–9, especially nn. 121–9). New findings in Arabic dialectology have led to a new appraisal of old problems.<sup>104</sup> Some of these have just been mentioned, and a few others, some of which are less frequently treated, will now be dealt with. (See also Procházka, this volume, §9.3.3.1.)

### 7.16.2 *ʔayna* ‘WHICH (ONE)?’

This interrogative (pronoun and adjective) has been considered to be Aramaic: Landberg 1883: 176–7 (‘syriaque’); Jastrow (1978: 117), who compares it to ‘altsyr-isch’ *aynā*. One is inclined to agree with Al-Jallad (2012: 337), who quotes modern dialectal forms such as (Bišmizzīn, Lebanon) *ʔaynu*, *ʔaynuwwi*, *ʔayniyyi*, etc. (to which can be added Damascene *ʔanu*, f *ʔani*, pl *ʔanon*, constructed with 3rd-person

dialects—a topic rarely studied—see Borg 2008. For early borrowings in CLA, see Fränkel 1886 (still valuable, although in need of updating). There is a vast literature of uneven quality on the topic of ‘Aramaic borrowings’, often ‘Syriaco-centred’. See the judicious remarks of Retsö 2006, and before that Cohen (1920).

<sup>101</sup> See e.g. Blau 1966–7: 628 (Index: ‘Aramaic influence’) and Blau 1983. For the compound conditional particle *ʔn law* / *\*illaw* see Kinberg et al. 2001: 11.

<sup>102</sup> For the long history of the interaction between Aramaic and Arabic see a brief account in Weninger 2011a and—to mention just a few studies—Hoyland 2004, Griffith 1997, Knauf 2011, Macdonald 2000 and 2009, Retsö 2003 and 2011, Taylor 2002.

<sup>103</sup> For a (shorter) recent account see Río Sánchez 2013 (with useful bibliographic complements).

<sup>104</sup> See e.g. Behnstedt 1991b on Diem 1970 about the personal pronouns *henne(n)* (3 com pl), *-kon* (2 com pl), and *-hon* (3 com pl).

pronouns, beside *ʔayna*; cf. Cairene *anhu*, f *anhi*, pl *anhum*, Bahraini *anu* (Holes 2001: 24, etc.)), and proposes ‘to reconstruct’ *ʔaynV* as a morphologically conditioned variant of *\*ʔayy*, i.e. *\*ʔayy* + *-n-*, which seems quite reasonable (cf. OA *\*ʔayyš-in*). A possible example is in Diem 1995: text 47 (twelfth century), with comment pp. 316–17. *ʔaynā* is frequent in Middle Arabic Ottoman texts (Lentin 1997: 215–16), with a variant *ʔāna*.

### 7.16.3 VERBAL PATTERN ŠAC<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>AC<sub>3</sub>

Quite a few verbs in Levantine dialects have the (‘causative’) pattern ša<sub>1</sub>CC<sub>2</sub>aC<sub>3</sub>, e.g. *šaqlab* ‘to knock over’ (Feghali 1919: 198). This is commonly attributed to borrowing from Syriac, and is probably the case for some of these verbs, but the pattern (which is not very frequent in Aramaic as a whole, and is often regarded as a relic or even as a (lexical) loan from other languages) seems also to have existed in CLA in the particular case of C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub> roots (Kamil 1963: 27–8), and it is used in other Semitic languages (Akkadian, Hebrew, Ugaritic). On the other hand, dialects clearly use this pattern to freely create new ‘expressive’ verbs.

#### 7.16.4 *\*tay*

For *\*tay* (see §7.12.2), the Aramaic influence suggested by Al-Jallad (2012: 327) rests on the fact that, in this language too, purpose clauses are introduced by ‘the reflex of the relative-determinative *d-* < *ḏV*’.

#### 7.16.5 *dīl*

For the genitive particle *dīl* see §7.13.3. Eksell 2009: 45–8 gives a tentative chronology of the emergence of ‘*d* / *l*’ (genitive) particles, in relation to the Aramaic substrate.

#### 7.16.6 *\*ā > ō*

For this long-discussed issue, see e.g. Fleisch 1963; Diem 1979: 45–6, Lecerf 1982; and, with new data, Behnstedt 1992 and Arnold and Behnstedt 1993: 67–8 (with negative, reserved, and positive positions respectively).

As an illustration of *\*ā > ō* in some dialects, it is interesting to mention, in a (much colloquializing) Middle Arabic text (early eighteenth century) the form *تلاّب* *tlāb* ‘ask!’, where the vowel of the colloquial imperative *\*tlōb* seems to have been unduly interpreted as an [ō] type realization of *\*/ā/* in the author’s dialect (cf. the favourable phonetic environment: emphatic, labial) (Lentin 1997: 501).

#### 7.16.7 *\*a* TO [e]

The raising of *\*a* to [e] ‘in unstressed pretonic syllables after the voiceless sibilant’ (*Σεουδα/sewdā*’ < *\*sawdā*, see §7.5.4) could, according to Al-Jallad (2017a: §4.1.1.1) ‘point towards areal influence from Aramaic’.

7.16.8 \**la-ka*, *la-ki*

On the also long-debated issue \**la-ka*, *la-ki* (attributive preposition + suffixed 3m/fsng pron) → dialectal *lak*, *lik*, see e.g. Durand (1999: §4c pp. 95–6), who writes ‘If nothing allows one totally to dismiss the effect of one (or more) phonetic evolutions or of an analogical process, nothing allows one definitely to dismiss the interference of the Aramaic substrate either...’ (my translation). This could easily apply to most of the issues raised by the problem of the influence of the Aramaic substrate, and accurately summarizes the cautious position one has generally to adopt, in the absence of decisive data.

7.16.9 *ʔabn* (M), *bənt* (F)

*ʔabn* (m) and *bənt* (f) have the sense ‘aged such and such’ (lit. ‘son/daughter of’). For Barthélemy (1935–69: 65 and 63), this usage is a ‘reminiscence’ of Aramaic.

7.16.10 ALLOMORPHS OF THE 3MSG  
SUFFIX PRON AFTER -V#

A few dialects in the province of Antioch have *-āhni*, *-ūhni*, *-ihni* as allomorphs of the 3msg suffix pron after -V#. For Arnold (1998: 102–3) these forms betray a ‘contamination’ by the Aramaic endings *-inne*, *-unne* and could have developed in a phase of Aramaic–Arabic bilingualism. See Klimiuk 2016 for another tentative explanation (for the dialect of Latakia).

7.16.11 *hāḏā alladī*

*hāḏā alladī*, with the demonstrative pronoun used as ‘anticipatory correlative in relative clauses’ is attributed—at least partly—by Blau 1983: 142 §5 (= 1988: 289) to Aramaic influence. An alternative explanation could be to consider it a transposition (a loan translation) of the colloquial relative *halli*, of which it could thus be an early (indirect) attestation.

## 7.16.12 ANTICIPATORY SUFFIX PERSONAL PRONOUN

Here we deal with the constructions with the datival preposition *l(a)-* and anticipatory suffix personal pronoun. (See also Procházka, this volume, §9.3.3.1.)

We find in Levantine dialects—as in many others—a bundle of constructions which have to be clearly distinguished from each other. The two types are:<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Not to mention others like *ʿando la-Mḥammad*, lit.: at-him to-Mohamad ‘at Mohammad’s house’. See further Britti 1980: 122.

## A) A verbal clause:

(directly or indirectly) trans verb + (generally) a suffixed personal pron representing the obj of the v<sup>106</sup> + (generally) the prep *l(a)-*<sup>107</sup> + the obj of the verb;

*šəft-o la-Mḥammad?*

You-saw-him to-Mohammad?

‘Did you see Mohammad?’

The ‘generally’ between brackets indicates that the following four subtypes of the verbal clause are found (but not all in the same dialect), even if the first is by far the most common:

*šəft-o la-Mḥammad*

I-saw-him to-Mohammad

*šəft la-Mḥammad*

I-saw to-Mohammad

*šəft-o Mḥammad*

I-saw-him Mohammad

*šəft Mḥammad*

I-saw Mohammad

(‘I saw Mohammad’)

## B) A nominal phrase:

A noun + suffixed personal pron anticipating the complement noun + the prep *l(a)-* + the complement noun

*ʔamm-o la-Mḥammad*

Mother-his to-Mohammad

‘Mohammad’s mother’

These constructions, especially the verbal one, have generally been<sup>108</sup>—and are still often (e.g. Weninger 2011a: 750)—considered Aramaisms, to the point that in the literature one comes across formulas like ‘an obvious Aramaic substrate device’. But this may not be self-evident, and some scholars (e.g. Diem 1979: 47–9 §34, with solid arguments) have expressed their reservations. Contini (1987: 104–11) and now Souag (2017)<sup>109</sup> have moved the issue forward significantly.<sup>110</sup> After a close comparison between Arabic and Aramaic data, Contini is inclined to see in the type *šəft la-Mḥammad* a conservative feature most probably reinforced by the Aramaic substrate, and a more probable interference of this substrate for the types *šəft-o la-Mḥammad* and *šəft-o Mḥammad*, without excluding the possibility of independent

<sup>106</sup> Proleptic, cataphoric, or, as it is generally described in the literature on Arabic, ‘anticipatory’; cf. Blau 1966–7: 628 (index; ex.: 395, §278.4): ‘anticipatory pronominal suffix’; Blau 1981: 82, 144, and 230 ‘anticipative pronominal suffix’.

<sup>107</sup> In Cilician Arabic, the preposition *ʔala* is also used as an accusative marker: *ʔana ʕību ʔa-l-ḥalīb* ‘I’ll bring you the milk’ (Procházka 2016: 156 (§3) and n. 35. See also Procházka 2002a: 158 (§3.3.3) and 153 (§3.1.2).

<sup>108</sup> Feghali 1928: 298; 362–3. See Diem 1979: 47–8, n. 147 for references.

<sup>109</sup> I would like to thank him for kindly sending me a copy of his article prior to publication.

<sup>110</sup> An intermediate step was the lucid article by Britti (1980). Unfortunately, the historical reconstruction he proposes is a little speculative.



developments. Both take into account the presence of these constructions in areas where there was no Aramaic substrate. Souag also examines the Levantine (including Cypriot), Mesopotamian, and Maghrebi (including Maltese) data, as well as Central Asian data. He convincingly suggests that the constructions involved are so different that they must have emerged independently, even if the various languages that were in contact with Arabic certainly played a role.

One might add a few remarks. The question of *l(a)-* as a marker of the object<sup>111</sup>—a feature common in all varieties of Arabic, and in Semitic languages—should probably be set apart. In addition one has to bear in mind that, in some syntactic conditions, it is obligatory, e.g. *bišūf-na ʔəli w ʔalak*<sup>112</sup> (lit. ‘he sees us to me and to you’, i.e. ‘he sees us both’), and that, in many cases, there is no alternative construction (without *la-*). This should lead us to qualify the statements about the expressivity of such constructions or the supposed topicalization of the comment. Besides, these constructions are extremely frequent in a lot of Semitic (Rendsburg 1991: 1270–2 and n. 14.) and non-Semitic languages, which seems quite natural when one thinks of the way people speak and construct their utterances. Further research is naturally required to decide, if possible, if we are looking at an Aramaism here or not. Among the many points that remain to be investigated, is the question of the semantic constraints (determined/specific, human/non-human/inanimate) on the nature of the object.

More historical documentation needs to be collected on this feature. An early example is (Blau 1966–7: 395, ms. written in the tenth century): *fa qālū lahu al-ʔubbahāt li-dālika al-ʕilmānī* lit. ‘Then said to him the fathers to that layman’ (= ‘The fathers said to that layman’); two later examples are Ibn ʔAbī ʔUṣaybiʕa (thirteenth century; A. Müller 1884: 905, -2) *fa ʔuḥṭa ʕalā mawḡūdihi lahu ʕalā yad al-Ḥakīm* ‘his estates were seized by al-Ḥakīm’; Al-Jazarī (d. 1338) III 715, 15: *wa saʔala-hu baʕḍ al-ḡamāʕa li-Badr al-dīn al-maḍkūr ʕan...* ‘one of the group asked this Badr al-Dīn about...’.

## 7.17 FINALE

It has probably become clear from the preceding pages that the challenging project of writing even an outline history of the Levantine dialects is currently unachievable, and one fears that it will remain an elusive goal for some time to come for various reasons, some of which have been described in detail (§7.3). This is even more of a pity because in recent years some new and stimulating views on early stages of the history of Arabic have been brought forward by scholars, and an improvement in our knowledge of the history of the Arabic dialects would be of benefit to their work, and of help in testing their hypotheses. So, instead of drawing premature conclusions, I would rather end with my overall impression of past colloquial Levantine (in so far as we can capture it from the documents available), but through the words of two

<sup>111</sup> See Levin 1987 (for Galilee).

<sup>112</sup> With the allomorph *ʔal-* of *l(a)-*.

distinguished scholars. Commenting on the language of the early papyri he studied, Simon Hopkins (1984: xlvi) speaks of ‘a very impressive continuity in colloquial Arabic usage, and the roots of the modern vernaculars are thus seen to lie very deep’, while Landberg (1888: 12) writes, about the vulgarisms encountered in ʿUsāma ibn Munqid’s *Memoirs*: ‘All of them are found in today’s spoken language of Syria and it is very interesting to note that that language is, on the whole, not very different from the language of ʿUsāma’s days [the twelfth century]’ (my translation).

# Dialects (speech communities), the apparent past, and grammaticalization

## *Towards an understanding of the history of Arabic*

JONATHAN OWENS

### 8.1 PREAMBLE

#### 8.1.1 INTRODUCTORY

Grammaticalization studies over the last twenty-five years have eclipsed studies in historical linguistics itself. There is, for instance, an *Oxford Handbook of Grammaticalization Theory*, published in 2011, but none, as yet, on historical linguistics. Grammaticalization, however, is not universally accepted as a unitary concept, even if its constituent elements as essential historical linguistic concepts individually are in principle uncontroversial. These include loss of lexical independence and phonological reduction, an increasing morphological fixedness, an increase in grammatical and semantic obligatoriness, developmental pathways typical of certain grammatical formatives and, for some, a two-stage primary and secondary grammaticalization.<sup>1</sup>

The main argument against grammaticalization is that it encapsulates in one concept what in fact are phenomena derived from different linguistic domains. While arguments for grammaticalization as an epiphenomenon have been well articulated (Campbell 2001; Newmeyer 2001; Dimmendaal 2011: chapter 5), there exists what I believe is a still largely undiscussed, and from the grammaticalization

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations in what follows additional to those used throughout this book are: ELA 'Eastern Libyan Arabic', G/N 'Gulf-Najdi', L/E 'Levantine/Egyptian', NA 'Nigerian Arabic', d' = voiced alveolar emphatic implosive. In glosses, '2-', '3-' indicate respectively 2msng and 3msng, unless other suffixes follow.

camp still unanswered, critique.<sup>2</sup> This is articulated in Janda 2001. Janda is concerned not so much with the alleged epiphenomenal nature of grammaticalization, but rather with its lack of sociolinguistic realism. In particular he sees in grammaticalization studies the tendency to view ‘the diachronic transmission of morphemes as continuous in the manner of living organisms’ (2001: 306). Against this Janda advocates integrating sociolinguistic variationist theory into the discussion of grammaticalization, this having the effect of ‘re-communalizing’ perspectives on language change and reorientating statements about change in morphemes into change in the use of morphemes in a language community over time. This allows Janda to invoke existing Labovian models of change, for instance, the generational model and the communal change model (see 2001: §8.5).

Janda’s perspective, still relevant today, is somewhat programmatic. It calls for investigations of ‘apparent grammaticalization in progress today’ (2001: 318) in order to discern what allegedly happened in the past. Here Janda invokes Labov’s uniformitarianism principle: if linguistic change is uniform, observed variation today can be projected back into the interpretation of the stages by which change came about. Janda essentially asks that a more specific relation be established between conceptualizing language change as a property embedded in language communities and conceptualizing it as a property inherent in the nature of grammaticalization.

This is an important critique of grammaticalization theory, but as it stands, three major problems with Janda’s analysis can be discerned.

The first is a practical problem: documenting grammaticalization changes is time-consuming in and of itself. Arguing for their plausibility via contemporary change-in-progress studies is certainly a worthy goal, but such studies themselves require if anything, yet more resources of time and effort. Marshalling adequate data alone is a barrier to exploring a linkage between sociolinguistic and grammaticalization methodology.

A second, minor technical issue with Janda’s exposition is that he models single-speech communities. Typically, historical linguistics requires a comparative perspective to triangulate into the past from at least two contemporary situations.

A third, more fundamental problem is an obvious, logical problem inherent in historical linguistics. Only a historical perspective, whether based on reconstruction or attestation in documents, allows one to establish whether a change has gone to completion. Sociolinguistic change in progress documents the multifaceted world of real-time language. Changes may proceed to an ‘end’, but they may also add new elements to language which in some way change language, but not necessarily by taking away or simply substituting for what was there before (e.g. Tagliamonte and D’Arcy 2007), they may simply document ongoing, stable variation (Trudgill 2002: 108). There will rarely be a direct, documented connection between variation

<sup>2</sup> Lehman 2004 addresses a number of the criticisms elaborated on in the special *Language Sciences* 2001 volume, but makes no mention of the potential variationist, sociolinguistic contribution either to grammaticalization theory, or in identifying potential problems in grammaticalization theory in integrating variationist analysis.

today, and, in an ideal generation +1, a state of language where the variant is no longer attested. Rather, the present serves as an analogue for the past, but doesn't substitute for the past. The past will always require reconstruction.

This necessity is all the more glaring in Janda's interest in variation, since in only a miniscule number of cases will adequate written documentation exist detailing how past variation looked and how it links up to contemporary speech communities. If Janda (2001: 307) diagrams the relation between communal variation and grammaticalization change over 200 years, it is a purely hypothetical example. One will have to wait another 150 years or so before, one hopes, through the continued application of trend studies, continuous, variational data over such a time period will be available.

There are, however, alternative methodological perspectives which potentially allow one to bridge the gap between observed contemporary variation and what it implies for understanding the past history of a language. Two will be discussed here.

Following Janda, the first methodological perspective comes from variationist theory. Variationist theory typically works within single languages. Languages, however, unless perhaps they are very, very small ones, exhibit dialectal variation to a greater or lesser degree. The link to sociolinguistic variationist thinking resides in the basic observation that dialects are maintained as linguistic entities by the social configurations which hold together language communities and the geographical boundaries which facilitate their separation. This perspective allows one to concretize Janda's purely hypothetical call to integrate variation and linguistic change by viewing contemporary dialects as repositories of the past of language communities. This conceptualization has two aspects. First, the variation within a single dialect can be projected backwards to understanding how the variation might have operated on earlier linguistic stages to lead to the observed contemporary dialectal differentiation. In particular in this regard, in §8.3.3 it will be argued that variation within contemporary Nigerian Arabic serves as a model for how a key morphological reinterpretation led to a fundamental innovation in p-stem verb marking in a number of Arabic dialects. Secondly, and complementing the first perspective, each individual dialect as a whole, i.e. abstracting away from internal dialect variation, serves as a comparative entity for reconstructing the language history, just as in classical historical linguistic reconstruction individual languages, or traits thereof, are the basic units of comparison.

Dialects from these two perspectives are argued to represent the 'apparent past' of a language or linguistic feature, and the stages by which the historical development of a feature occurred can be discerned in contemporary dialectal variation (Labov 2007). The analogy with sociolinguistic apparent time will be elucidated in §8.5.

A second methodological perspective builds on the results of the analysis derived from the apparent past (§§8.4, 8.5). It will be asked how the results derived therefrom complement, contradict, or simply exist in a parallel linguistic universe to that of a grammaticalization theory concerned with defining a directionality of linguistic change. One perspective which will be explored in §8.6 is that grammaticalization theory should help disentangle and define the stages by which a given grammaticalization process unfolded, for instance, by providing a filter for delimiting how a proposed set of historical linguistic changes came about.

### 8.1.2 THE DATA

The data for this book come from a language which, I have suggested (2013c: 469), is ideal for addressing questions of historical linguistic theory: Arabic. This is because Arabic<sup>3</sup> spread at a known point in time, after AD 622 in what is now known as the Islamic era, to cover a linear distance equalling one seventh of the earth's circumference, and has, roughly speaking, been spoken in the areas it is today for much or all of this time period (Owens 2009 for summary of Arabic, its varieties, and when they are documentable; see also §8.2). In the manner of Austronesian languages, the spread represents a punctuated phase (Dixon 1997), so reconstruction can in many cases plausibly be projected back to a common ancestor. This is not to say that reconstruction is simple, or that challenges even for the single issue discussed in this chapter don't remain. In particular, how Arabic looked in pre-Islamic times, where it was located, and its contact with other languages, an issue alluded to in §8.3.1.2, are all relevant, though outside the scope of the current chapter.

I will look at the history of one morpheme, \*b-, a p-stem verb prefix. In the first half of the chapter, a long §8.3, I will describe the grammatical properties of this morpheme in five distinct dialects. No general description of the morpheme exists, so it is necessary to describe those aspects relative to the current problem in each dialect. In two cases greater detail is needed. It is argued that the morpheme first grammaticalized in Gulf/Najdi Arabic, so its properties in this variety are scrutinized. For Nigerian Arabic, detail is needed, first because it is argued to form a crucial link in the development of \*b-, and secondly because no adequate descriptive account of it exists.

The five descriptive dialectal building blocks serve as the basis of a classic reconstruction (§8.4). The reconstruction feeds into the two issues of the nature of variationist-orientated historical linguistics (§8.5) and grammaticalization (§8.6).

## 8.2 TERMINOLOGY AND BASIC BACKGROUND

The p-stem (or 'imperfect') verb in Arabic is marked for tense and mood in a number of different ways in its different varieties. It has a basic structure common to all varieties of Arabic, allowing for local variation. This consists of a stem, typically of the form –CCVC–, an obligatory prefix (hence 'p(refix)-stem'), and, depending on person, a suffix. The prefix and suffix together constitute subject markers. The ideal structure is therefore:

(1) prefix-stem-suffix

I will term (1) the 'inflected p-stem', as opposed to the canonical –CCVC– which is termed simply the 'p-stem'.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. Arabic, not 'Arabics' as in McWhorter 2007, and 'Arabic', even if, as Retsö (2013) argues, there are no sufficient conditions for defining whether a given variety X is Arabic or not. These are issues which are strictly outside the scope of the current chapter, even if how one interprets them could well reflect on how one interprets Arabic language history itself.

The paradigm in (2) from Emirati Arabic shows these elements clearly. PV is the preformative vowel. This is a vowel which may—there is variation according to dialect and to class of stem—occur between the prefix and the stem. Since the preformative vowel as an independent morphophonological factor will generally have no role to play in this analysis, it will usually be represented as a part of the prefix (e.g. tPV-stem, ti-stem). However, where, as with Nigerian Arabic (§8.3.3), its distinctive structural status is relevant to conditioning factors, I will include it in the glosses.

(2) structural elements, inflected p-stem

	sng	pl	sng	pl
1	a-stem	n-PV-stem	a-ktib	n-i-ktib
2m	t-PV-stem	t-PV-stem-u	t-i-ktib	t-i-ktib-ün
2f	t-PV-stem-i	t-PV-stem-an	t-i-ktib-în	t-i-ktib-an
3m	y-PV-stem	y-PV-stem-u	y-i-ktib	y-i-ktib-ün
3f	t-PV-stem	y-PV-stem-an	t-i-ktib	y-i-ktib-an

t-/n-/y- = person marking prefixes, PV = preformative vowel, -u/-i versus-ün/-în differences irrelevant for the current chapter

In addition, some varieties allow one further prefix before the person prefix. One of the two most geographically widespread variants, is the prefix *b-*, also the variant which, in one form or another as outlined in this chapter, is the native variety probably of more than half of all Arabic native speakers, i.e. at least 150 million speakers. It is phonologically realized variously as *b-*, *bi-*, *ba*, *bā*, *be-*, and *m-*. When speaking of individual variants I term it ‘*b-*’ (or occasionally ‘*m-*’ for Uzbekistan), and ‘\**b-*’ when referring generically to the reconstructed ancestral morpheme. \**b-* is a morpheme with considerable variation in its semantic value, and it is this aspect of the morpheme in particular whose historical linguistics is a challenge.

Besides *b-*, there is also a variety of p-stem prefixes in dialects, including *ka-* or *ta-* in Morocco, ‘*amma*’, ‘*a*’, ‘*am*’, and other variants in some areas of Upper Egypt (B&W 1985b: 219–22). These would appear to mirror the semantic and syntactic behaviour of *b-* in one or more of its historical stages quite closely, though this is a matter of separate research. Each of these prefixes requires its own historical treatment.

It should furthermore be noted that there are many Arabic varieties with no *b-* or other indicative-like prefix at all. These include the Chadian Arabic dialects north-east of Ndjamena (Dagana area) as well as many speakers of Ndjamena Arabic itself, Eastern Libyan Arabic (ELA), many, though not all dialects of Iraqi Arabic, some Yemeni dialects (e.g. Tihāma area, Behnstedt 1985), Maltese, some Algerian dialects, and CLA. After the *b-* variant, lack of any prefix is the p-stem variant with the largest geographical distribution.

(3) *b*-less Arabic varieties

Chadian (Dagana): *ya-ktub* ‘he writes’

ELA: *yi-ktib*

Tihāma (coastal Red Sea Yemen): *ya-ktub*

CLA: *ya-ktub-u*

Beyond \*b- and its cognates, there are also various tense or mode markers such as (to mention a few only) *rāḥ*, *raḥ*, *laḥ*, *rāyih*, *ḥa*, *ha*, etc. in Egyptian, Gazan, Iraqi, Levantine, and Libyan Tripolitanian (Pereira 2008: 452), *ḡādi*, *ḡa* (Moroccan), *ša-* (Manākhā, Yemen (highlands, Werbeck 2001: 136–7)), *se* (Maltese, Borg and Azzopardi-Alexander 1997: 223), all of which are future markers. *ʿam-*, *ʿamma*, *ʿammāl* are ‘progressive, actuality markers’ (Cowell 1964: 320) in various Levantine dialects. There are also pragmatic/discourse prefixes such as Iraqi *da-*. Each of these again would require its own historical treatment. I will not consider these in detail, except to note that in those dialects where the ‘progressive, actuality’ prefixes occur, they usually alternate with \*b-, i.e. \*b-, and any of these markers usually form a commutational class.<sup>4</sup> The interaction of these p-stem prefixes with \*b- is obviously an interesting issue in and of itself, though, as will be seen, \*b- alone is challenging enough that it needs to be dealt with isolated from other possibly interacting factors. In the rest of this chapter I will be concerned only with the *b-* prefix, though I briefly touch on issues related to these other prefixes at various places in §8.3 and §8.4.4.

Five varieties, or dialects, of Arabic, will be the subject of this chapter, each of them using a reflex of a reconstructed \*b- p-stem verbal prefix. The five varieties can be briefly introduced here, Gulf-Najdi Arabic, Uzbekistan Arabic, Levantine/Egyptian Arabic, Nigerian Arabic, and Yemeni Arabic.

Gulf and Najdi Arabic are spoken in the Arabian Peninsula, and have been spoken in these areas since pre-Islamic times, i.e. pre-AD 622. One could attempt a more precise chronological interpretation for when Arabic was spoken in the different parts of the Arabian Peninsula, though this would not serve the immediate aims of this chapter. What is now Uzbekistan had by AD 710 been conquered by Arabic speakers some of whom came via the lower Persian Gulf (Oman) and some via Basra. However, around AD 800 Uzbekistan became an Arabic *Sprachinsel* with the re-Persianization of Khorasan and has remained so until today. In the nineteenth century small groups of Arabic speakers from Uzbekistan settled in north-west Afghanistan.

Arabic was introduced into Egypt in the course of the Arab–Islamic conquests which were largely complete there by 642. Complete Arabicization of Egypt took many centuries, though 642 serves as a chronological point of orientation for when Egyptian Arabic first existed (see Behnstedt and Woidich, this volume). The related Levantine Arabic spoken in Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and south-central Turkey was introduced into this fairly large region at different times (see Procházka’s and Lentin’s chapters, this volume). In Jordan, central Syria, and parts

<sup>4</sup> In the same way as these tense markers do with the other p-stem indicative markers, *ka-*, *ʿamma*, *ʿa*, *ʿam*. Simply to indicate that the matter is complicated, occurrences of these further prefixes do not necessarily imply the presence of *b-*, or indeed the presence of any obligatory indicative prefix. Iraqi Arabic, for instance, has future marker *rāḥ* or *raḥ* and a pragmatic/discourse marker *da-*, that optionally occur with the p-stem verb, but otherwise is like the varieties in (3), which do not require a prefix other than the basic person/ number/ gender prefix. Similarly, Tripolitanian Arabic has both *ḥa-* and *bi-* futures, both of which are optional in contrast to the more common Ø marking of the p-stem (see §8.3.1.1 (7)). While this is the general situation, Damascene and some other Levantine varieties do allow *ʿam-b-* (Cowell 1964: 320).



of Lebanon, Arab populations have been present since pre-Islamic times. A more complete Arabization began with the Arab-Islamic conquest beginning around 634 with the taking of Jerusalem and Damascus.

From Upper Egypt Arabs began moving into the Sudanic region in the early thirteenth century and had spread into the Lake Chad region by 1400, this last migration being the immediate ancestral group of today's Nigerian Arabs. Migrations from Upper Egypt beginning about 1035 are also responsible for the Arabization of Tripolitania alluded to in this chapter as well (see Behnstedt and Woidich's, Aguadé's, and Taine-Cheikh's chapters, this volume). Finally, Arabic has been spoken in Yemen since pre-Islamic times (Rabin 1951: 46 map 4). *Ṣanʿāʾ*, however, lies outside the original Arabic habitation area (in the Ḥimyar region). While Arabic was spoken in the region of *Ṣanʿāʾ* before then, Rabin suggests that it was only completely Arabized by the tenth century (see Watson's chapter, this volume).

It is not claimed that in each of the areas under consideration the \*b- p-stem prefix had the form and distribution which it has today, beginning from the period of the presence of the first Arabs.<sup>5</sup> However, as will be seen, it is argued that the spread of \*b- described did occur in some regions very early, and indeed has existed in the forms which will be reconstructed since at least the earliest Islamic period, if not in the pre-Islamic era. It is a question for further study to look at more fine-grained historical interpretations of when a given function of \*b- developed in each of the five different dialects.

### 8.3 FIVE CASE STUDIES OF \*b-

Historically, \*b- can only be understood via reconstruction, since it is not attested in OA sources (§8.4.4.2). Assuming the 'uniformitarian hypothesis' (Labov 1972), alluded to in §8.1.1, this means that it is first necessary to summarize key comparative aspects for each area it is attested in. As each dialect area has its own peculiarities as far as the prefix goes, descriptive detail needs to be expended describing each area. Particular attention will be given to Nigerian Arabic, whose \*b- properties, which are still in need of basic description, are crucial for understanding the history of the morpheme.

#### 8.3.1 WHERE IT BEGINS—CASE 1: GULF AND NAJDI ARABIC

It is argued that all reflexes of \*b- in Arabic derive from a common source, both a geographical one and a semantic/pragmatic one, and that this source is still discernible today in the Gulf and Najdi Arabic dialects. As the largest amount of information available is found for the Gulf dialects, these are the ones which I dwell on in this section. The key elements of this prefix are its form, its meaning, and its distribution. Beginning with the first, it is variously *ba-*, *bā-*, *bi-*, or *b-* (*b* stands for all of these in the examples immediately following). It may take the allomorph *m-* before the 1pl *n-* (Holes 2001: 27).

<sup>5</sup> Note, not 'Arabization', which is relevant for some areas, e.g. Egypt and the Levant, but not for others, such as Uzbekistan and Nigeria, since in these regions Arabic is a minority language.

- (4a) *bā-y-mūt*  
*b-3msng-die*  
 'He will die' (Brockett 1985: 21, Khābūra in northern Oman)
- (4b) *bi-ni-ntihi*  
*b-1pl-finish*  
 'We'll finish' (Holes 1990: 188, Bahrain)
- (4c) *b-yi-rġi<sup>c</sup>-k* *al-ġārah*  
*b-3msng-bring back-you* *def.a-attack*  
 'He intends to come back and raid you' (Ingham 1994a: 121, Najdi)

Before the 1sng *-a* it is always *b-* alone.

- (4d) *b-a-štaġil*  
*b-1sng-work*  
 'I will work' (Johnstone 1967: 152)

The prefix occurs before the personal prefix of the p-stem verb. Holes (2001: 27), writing on Bahraini Arabic (Baḥārna dialect), notes that *b-* has the allomorph *m-* before the 1pl prefix *n-*. In data of my own, I also have the allomorph *m-* recorded before the 1pl *n-*, from Al-<sup>c</sup>Ain (UAE). This allomorph is not reported in Najdi Arabic, however.

- (5) *mi-n-šull-hum* *wiyyā-na*  
*b-1pl-take-them* *with-us*  
 'Should we take them with us?' (own data,<sup>6</sup> Al-<sup>c</sup>Ain)

As Clive Holes (p.c.) points out, the Baḥārna population represents a stratum considerably older than the <sup>c</sup>Arab population in Bahrain, which would attest to the ancientness of this variant. By the same token, outside the Gulf region it is not attested in the Arabian Peninsula, so properly speaking this morphophonological variation cannot be universally included in what will be termed the Gulf/Najdi (G/N) value of the *b-* prefix. It is only G (with a centre among the Baḥārna). The semantic values of the *\*b-* prefix suggested in the following sections, however, apply to all G/N dialects, regardless of whether they have this morphophonology, so the unity of *\*b-* as a proto-feature rests on its semantic and distributional properties, which are described in the next section. The fact that, as will be seen, a consistent *b- ~ m-* alternation is attested throughout the dialects treated in this chapter simply strengthens an early association of *\*b-* with the Arabian Peninsula.

### 8.3.1.1 Meaning: future, irrealis, intentional, habitual, non-evidential

Turning to its meaning, most sources are rather laconic, usually glossing it at least with 'future' (and sometimes nothing more, e.g. Ingham 1994a: 120; Johnstone 1967), or 'future' and/or 'intentional' (Holes 2001: 27; Brockett 1985: 21). Persson 2008 has the most detailed discussion of this morpheme, based on corpus data from Kuwait,

<sup>6</sup> The data were collected by Bill Young from two native speakers in Al-<sup>c</sup>Ain.

Qatar, Bahrain, the Emirates, and Oman. She looks at *b-* in various contexts and notes the following major semantic domains: future (6b), irrealis (6a), intentional (6d), or habitual action (6c), an analysis which is in accord with but also extends what other observers have said about the prefix. She also suggests that ‘non-evidentiality’ is a possible generalizing label, which I will adapt as the glossed meaning of G/N *b-*. The *b*-marked proposition is distanced from the speaker’s immediate experience.

- (6a) *al-insān lo ma yiba yi-mūt bi-ymūt guwwa*  
 the-man if not 3msng-want 3msng-die b-3msng-die force  
 ‘If man doesn’t want to die he’ll die against his will’ (2008: 41, UAE)
- (6b) *fi-l-mustaqbal al-ixwān ma b-ya<sup>c</sup>rif-u ba<sup>c</sup>d*  
 in the-future the-brothers not b-3-know-pl each other  
 ‘In the future brothers won’t know each other’ (2008: 42, Oman)
- (6c) *al-ḥēne yōm b-a-ḥuṭṭ šāy hina dāxil b-a-bannid al-bāb*  
 the-time when b-1sng-place thing here inside b-1sng-close the-door  
 ‘Now if/when I place something here inside, I close the door’ (2008: 40, UAE)
- (6d) *lo wāḥid hindi hināk b-i-sawwi ‘alē-na yikūn kalb ya-bi*  
 if one Indian there b-3-do on-us 3-be dog 3-want  
*yi-dbaḥ-na ma na-<sup>c</sup>rif huwe šu yi-qūl*  
 3-kill-us not 1pl-know he what 3-say  
 ‘If an Indian out there would do something against us, if he’d be a bastard, want to cheat us, we wouldn’t know what he’s saying’ (2008: 41, UAE)

What makes defining *b-* challenging in this variety is that it is always optional, i.e. the same thing can be said without using the *b-* prefix. This is apparent in an interesting set of statistics, detailing the frequencies of *b-* in various contexts, compiled by Persson. She divides her statistics according to whether *b-* has a future or a non-future meaning, and according to main and dependent clauses. The largest number of *b-* occurrences comes in main clauses, 190 tokens (2008: 34). However, in main clauses, non-use of *b-* in a future meaning is even greater at 218 tokens. Other categories show similar split realizations, *b-* and non-*b-*, in the same, non-contrastive meanings.<sup>7</sup> A second context worth noting where *b-* has a dense distribution is a non-future meaning in either the condition (protasis) or result (apodosis) half of conditional clauses. Here in fact, of 126 total p-stem tokens, some 77 of these are marked by *b-*, so in this context it appears to be the statistically preferred form.<sup>8</sup>

Lack of *b-*, or Ø as it will be called, is, against the values set for *b-*, ambiguous: Ø marks intentionality as well as non-evidential, future, imagined events and states, as does *b-*, but it also represents ‘real’ and evidential events or states. *b-* therefore points towards a fixed value, but, it would follow, on any token choice, it is up to the speaker

<sup>7</sup> Persson notes (2008: 42): ‘the context is more decisive than the presence or absence of *b-* to signal intention’. It is clear from her article that the factors which she describes require elucidation against more detailed sociolinguistic and discourse–corpus analysis.

<sup>8</sup> Whereas it is clearly impossible to speak of grammatical conditioning of the occurrence of *b-*, it would be relevant to explore statistically whether there aren’t conditioning tendencies that favour the use of *b-* in, say, conditional contexts. For this a more complete and better defined statistical sample is needed.

to represent ‘irrealis, intentionality, future, non-evidentiality’ with *b-* or without *b-*. *b-* is optional for representing those functions which it can mark.

The set of semantic functions which G/N *b-* represents falls within grammatical domains whose use typically depends on the speaker’s assessment of the relation between a proposition and the external world which it references. Non-evidentiality or volition, for instance, lies in the eye of the speaker (de Haan 2012: 1). On this basis G/N *b-* can be said to represent a relation between a proposition and the speaker’s assessment of the external context it references as falling within the range of future, non-evidential, irrealis, intentional events.

Given one of the *b*-functions, it is up to the speaker to either use *b-* or not use *b-*. I term this freedom of choice ‘asymmetric semantic optionality’. The choice to use *b-* is optional; if it is used it conveys a specific semantics. The semantics which it conveys, however, can equally be signalled without *b-*. The term ‘asymmetric’ refers to this state of affairs: ‘if PROP<sub>non-evidential</sub> then either *b-* or Ø; if PROP<sub>evidential</sub> then Ø.

There is one more comparative point of interest, and that is to determine how frequent *b-* is against all tokens of p-stem verbs. What the overall basis of Persson’s statistics is, however, is not clear. The tokens and statistics just discussed were taken from 4,000 predicates found in twenty-three hours of recordings (presumably, p-stem verb predicates, though this is not stated explicitly, 2008: 32). In normal spoken Arabic (not for e.g. newsreader MSA), twenty-three hours of speech would yield far more than 4,000 verbal predicates. In one set of statistics covering the same region (Owens et al. 2010: 26), about three hours of speech alone contained 3,940 verbal predicates. In order to have an idea about how frequent *b-* actually is, I have therefore used data quantified for this and other studies (Owens et al. 2010, 2013). This data includes Al-Rawi 1990, which is publicly available. These are all narrative and conversational texts, and cover the same dialect area as Persson. The key statistics are the two sets of p-stem verbs, as it is only on p-stem verbs that *b-* can occur (Table 8.1).<sup>9</sup>

TABLE 8.1 Number of predicates, tokens of *b-* in two Emirati Arabic corpora

	Total predicates	Total verbs	Total p-stems	Total p-stem <i>b-</i>	% p-stem <i>b-</i>
Al-Rawi:	1,112	1,032 (93%)	358	52	13%
Oral:	2,159	1,960 (91%)	1247	63	5%

<sup>9</sup> A cursory glance at these two corpora reveals further potential factors favouring *b-*. In the al-Rawi corpus there are thirty-four tokens of p-stem verbs occurring as complements of *gāl* ‘say’, i.e. giving the context of indirect speech. Of these, seventeen, or nearly a third of all *b-* tokens, are marked by *b-*. Persson distinguishes only ‘object complement clauses’, so no comparison is possible with her data. The link to the subject of a *gāl*-complement is perhaps that in using *b-* the speaker transfers their assessment of the situation to the subject of the ‘say’ clause and thereby sets the action off into the realm of non-evidentiality. It is also striking that in the ‘oral’ corpus, which includes one short telephone conversation (provided by Appen) there are twenty-three tokens of *b-*. *b-* is perhaps not only to be syntactically, but also stylistically influenced, with perhaps a more conversational style favouring *b-*. Clive Holes (p.c.) expands on the point, noting that Bahārna texts (Holes 2005) which describe future events have many more examples of *b-* than those describing an historical narrative (e.g. *ibid.*: 77ff. versus 152–4).

*b-* appears not to be particularly frequent on a token basis in actual discourse. In Pereira's (2008: 561–6, see next paragraph) two texts, there are only three tokens of *b-* in over 1,200 words. However, the many factors affecting its discourse distribution remain to be explored (see n. 9 for further comments).

Outside the Gulf-Najdi region, Tripolitanian Arabic in western Libya also has a *b-*, which Pereira (2008: 451, 508) describes as a 'future of intention'. *b-* is optional. Pereira's discussion is brief, but from both the description and the examples it appears to fall in line with Gulf-Najdi both structurally and semantically. Caubet (2017) in a recent study similarly reports a future/volitional *b-* (or *bī*) in Fezzan Arabic.

- (7) *ma nə-ḥsab-ū-š-ši b-y-ži lākən že*  
 not 1-think-pl-him-not *b-3-come* but came  
 'We didn't think that he intended to come, but he came' (Pereira 2008: 508)

### 8.3.1.2 Schematic representation

Up to five different varieties of contemporary Arabic will serve as the basis of this historical linguistic analysis, and so in order to facilitate systematic comparison among them key structural aspects of *b-* will be identified and normatized. I summarize these under three categories, 'form', 'status', and 'yibğa/yiba/yibi/yibbi'. 'Form' in particular encodes whether *b-* alone occurs, or whether the allomorph *m-* before the 1pl also occurs (see §8.3.1.3). 'yibğa/yiba/yibi/yibbi' (= 'he wants') tracks whether the presumed etymological source for *b-* also occurs in the dialect, and 'status', the most important parameter, describes key formal and semantic properties of *b-*. 'Status' typically has two aspects, one its formal properties of occurrence—optionality for instance—and one a general characterization of its function/meaning. For the Gulf-Najdi *b-* these parameters have the following values.

- (8) Parametricized values of *b-* in G/N  
 a. Form: *b-*, dialectally (Baḥārna) ~ *m-* before *-n* 1pl  
 b. Status: asymmetrical semantic (optional); non-evidential marker  
 c. yibğa/yiba/yibi/yibbi

As far as form goes, as will be seen later (particularly in the reconstruction in §8.4), whether or not an alternation between *b-* and *m-* is attested is important. G has this. The putative historical source (in the interpretation adopted here) (c) is still in use throughout the region. The most complicated parameter is what is termed 'status'. This parameter describes the type of alternation which is attested between *b-* ~ Ø. As we have seen, the alternation between these morphemes is semantic. It is not defined by a simple syntactic or configurational parameter. The relation is termed 'asymmetric' on the basis of (9):

- (9) Ø occurs in all contexts where *b-* occurs; *b-* does not occur in all contexts where Ø occurs. In contexts where Ø and *b-* co-occur, they both mean 'S(emantics)'.

In all asymmetric relations, *b-* is optional (if all As can be Bs, but not vice versa, A can always replace B). Optionality, as will be seen, can be a contrastive status

parameter, but in this case it is, by the nature of the asymmetric relation, not, and hence is placed in parentheses.

### 8.3.1.3 Historical origin of *b-*

While there is no study tracing the historical linguistics of all \**b-* exponents, there are a number of suggestions for where it came from. These can be divided into three types. The first is essentially an ad hoc assessment pertaining to individual dialects, or simply free association with individual words. By implication, these could, given linguistically sound arguments, be extended to \**b-* in other dialects as well. Yoseph (2012: 78) for instance writing on Levantine *b-* (see §8.3.2) suggests its origin is a reduced form of *bidd* ‘want’. This would place the locus of innovation in the Levant rather than in the Gulf/Najdi area, since at least today *bidd* (or variants *badd*, *widd*) is not the common word for ‘want’. Besides having to explain the loss of *-dd-V(C)*,<sup>10</sup> this origin would need to explain the current G/N usage, whose value is quite different from Levantine, as will be seen. Eksell is another instance of the free-association approach. Among her various suggestions she puts forward \**bada*’ ‘begin’ as the source for G/N *b-* (2006a: 85), but offers no explanation of how this putative source worked its way into its current distribution.

In this somewhat confusing presentation,<sup>11</sup> Eksell (2006a: 82–4) suggests a second alternative<sup>12</sup> via borrowing from Babylonian Aramaic *b*ʿ*i* ‘want’ (2006a: 92–6). While Aramaic to Arabic borrowing is on a priori grounds always a possibility (Retsö 2000, Owens and Dodsworth 2009, and Holes’s chapter, this volume), Eksell would appear to limit a possible Aramaic origin to Syrian Arabic only, apparently because in recent history that is where Aramaic–Arabic contact remains strong. Aside from the well-known fact that Aramaic–Arabic contact goes back at least to 1,000 BC (Lipiński 2000: 38), so that borrowing could have occurred at many points and places in the Middle East (Owens 2017: 95–9), it would leave completely unexplained the near identity

<sup>10</sup> *bidd-* in the sense of ‘want’ nearly always takes a pronoun suffix, so that in those dialects with *bidd-* for ‘want’ the literal source is *bidd-i* ‘my wish’ = ‘I want’, *bidd-ak* ‘your wish’ = ‘you want’, etc. From a formal perspective alone, a large amount of material needs to be arbitrarily deleted in this explanation. The explanation of Fischer and Jastrow (1980: 75) as \**b-* deriving from CLA \**bayna(mā)* ‘while’, on the basis of the Šanʿāni 1sng (see §8.3.4) is equally ad hoc. They do not elaborate on how it could have served as the source of all \**b-* variants.

<sup>11</sup> Just to give a small taste of the rapid-fire presentation of hypotheses, Eksell (2006a: 83) first proposes that all *b-*s derive from \**bağa/yabgi*, then later from \**bada*, suggesting the latter has the advantage of allowing one to derive the Iraqi prefix *da-* from the final syllable of \**bada*, (though actually \**badaʾa*) i.e., some speakers favoured the initial syllable, others the final. Aside from the fact that Arabic has no general processes deleting final syllables, or final *-da-s* or initial *ba-s* (according to contemporary linguists’ wishes), Iraqi Arabic *da-* is a discourse pragmatic prefix marking what one might term ‘immediacy of speech situation’—*da-aḥči* ‘can’t you see (= *da*) I am speaking’. It shares no synchronic semantics with *b-*. The fact that one does not have an immediate answer as to the historical source of *da-* does not give licence to lump it together with other affixes whose origin is yet under discussion. Eksell ends by offering yet another possible source \**baqā* (i.e. *baqiya*) ‘remain’ (2006a: 96).

<sup>12</sup> Retsö (2000) makes a very plausible argument for Aramaic influence in early North African Arabic. The influence would have come via the original army population, which would have had native Aramaic speakers.

between Levantine and Egyptian *b-* (see §8.3.2), though the latter, to the extent that it has been in contact with Aramaic, was so only around the original Arabic–Islamic conquest of Egypt. I shall return to this.

Nonetheless, the arguments of this chapter stand even if it should turn out that *b-* originally came via pre-Islamic Arabic—Aramaic or Arabic—other Semitic language contact. It could, for instance, be that pre-Islamic Arabic calqued an Aramaic *b<sup>c</sup>i* ‘want’ volitional marker to \**yabğa* ‘want’, which then fed into the grammaticalization described in (12).<sup>13</sup> As Eksell notes, a number of contemporary north-east Aramaic dialects have *b-* or *bed-* as a future marker (e.g. Hertevin in central Turkey, Jastrow 1988: 54), perhaps derived from ‘want’.<sup>14</sup> What is argued for here is that in all Arabic varieties where *b-* is attested, it ultimately has a single origin. However, I believe there is no room for the argument that because the G/N case described here has a decidedly different function from that described in the next sections, one therefore needs to postulate two different historical etymological sources for the different areas and different functional outcomes (see §8.4.4.4). Rather, a discourse–pragmatic link is proposed explaining the transition from the Gulf/Najdi *b-* to its current functions in other varieties.

The third explanation is in fact the oldest, and has recently been well summarized in Retsö 2014a, 2014b. Basing himself on Spitta-Bey 1880: 203, Socin and Stumme 1894, and the summary in Kampffmeyer 1900, Retsö argues for two separate origins. One would see \**b-* as developing from the Arabic preposition *bi* ‘with, by means of, at’. *bi* in the sense of ‘at’ is used particularly in eastern Arabic dialects, including Levantine, Iraqi, and most Arabian peninsula dialects (in western varieties ‘at’ = *fi*). Amplifying Spitta, Retsö suggests the \**bi-* origin pertains in particular to Levantine and Egyptian Arabic, which are discussed in the next section. Retsö’s suggestion is underpinned by the association of a present-tense marker on a verb with a locative marker in a number of Semitic languages, including South Arabian (Qatabanian), Ugaritic, and Akkadian, which he sees not so much as a source for *bi-* as a parallel typological development.

Following Socin and Stumme 1894: 11, Retsö’s second origin is via the grammaticalization of the verb *yiba/yibi*. In this perspective (details offered here differ from Retsö’s), *b-* derives from the verb *yabğa* ‘want’, via *yiba* or *yibi* ‘want’. *yabğa* is attested in CLA, where it takes a verbal complement, which is introduced by the complementizer *ʔan*, e.g.

- (10) *ya-bğa ʔan ya-dhab-a*  
 3-want that 3-go-subjunctive  
 ‘He wants to go’

*yibğa* or *yabğa*, as well as *yiba*, *yambi*, and others (Holes p.c. Dec. 2015; 2016: 301–3) is also attested in contemporary G/N and can take a p-stem verb complement asyndetically.

<sup>13</sup> Parallel to one possible way the ‘want’ future developed in the Balkans (Joseph 2011: 7).

<sup>14</sup> Or *b<sup>c</sup>i* + *d*, where *d-* = subordinator.

- (11) *yi-bğa*     *i-sīr*  
       3-want    3-go  
       ‘He wants to go’

*yiba*, also attested as *yibi*, *yibbi* ‘want’,<sup>15</sup> probably derived from *yabğa* (Holes 2016: 303), and it also introduces a p-stem verb complement asyndetically. *yiba*, *yibbi* is not attested in OA, i.e. the relation *yabğa* > \**yiba* is a reconstruction. *yiba* and *yibbi* are quite widespread in contemporary Arabic, being found inter alia in most of North Africa, beginning with Libya, and sporadically in eastern Syria (Behnstedt 1997a: 719). Both *yabğa* and *yiba/yibbi* overlap with *b-*, but the overlap is non-isomorphic, i.e. *yiba* also occurs where *b-* doesn’t, and vice versa. The second etymology would therefore be as in (12).

- (12) origin of \**b-*  
       *yabğa* > *yiba* > *b-*  
       ‘he wants’ > reduced to *yiba* > prefix

In the spirit of Kampffmeyer<sup>16</sup> (1900: 31), what will be argued for in this chapter is that there is in fact only one origin of \**b-* and that is as in (12), i.e. the current treatment generalizes Socin and Stumme. Specific arguments against the dual-source origin will be given in §8.4.4.4. What needs to be developed first, however, is a holistic account of how one gets from (12) to all Arabic dialects where reflexes of \**b-* are attested. This is the question I turn to now.

### 8.3.2 CASE 2: LEVANTINE AND EGYPTIAN

Perhaps the easiest descriptive challenge is that of Levantine and Egyptian Arabic. While these two varieties can be considered two distinctive dialect areas, in respect of \**b-* Levantine and Egyptian are quite similar, so I will treat them together, concentrating on only one of them, Levantine.

#### 8.3.2.1 The data

The grammatical value of *b-* in Levantine is quite different from the *b-* in G/N. Generally it is described as forming an opposition to the Ø p-stem. *b-* is an indicative, whereas Ø is a subjunctive (Gralla 2006: 123–6; Yoseph 2012: 78, 182). In Mḥarde in west-central Syria, *b-* is an actual present, historical present, or habitual, and an indicative for Yoseph, whereas the Ø p-stem is used for wishes and commands, as a complement to aspectual and modal predicates, and as a future. Writing on Damascene Arabic, Grotzfeld (1965: 81) says that the *b-* p-stem describes events which ‘take place in the presence (or present) of the speakers’ (Geschehen, die

<sup>15</sup> In Emirati Arabic, for instance, one has both *yibi* and *yiba* ‘want’, *yōm yi-ba iḡiṣṣa* ‘when he wanted to cut it’ (Al-Rawi 1990) and *ma ḥad yi-bi idāwām* ‘no one wants to work’ (own data). Determining how the grammaticalization worked from \**yibi/yiba* > \**bi/ba-* is a further comparative exercise which will not be undertaken here.

<sup>16</sup> Though hardly the letter. Kampffmeyer (1900: 38–54) argues for an origin in a South Arabian conjunction *b*, and spends most of his account of its origins detailing its property in South Arabian languages. He gives no account of how this prefix would have assumed the different functions which it has in the Arabic dialects.



sich in der Gegenwart des Sprechenden ereignen). A more detailed description is found in Cowell 1964: 55, which I will use for further discussion. The complete *b-* p-stem paradigm is given in (13):

- (13) Damascus (Cowell 1964: 55)
- |    |              |              |
|----|--------------|--------------|
|    | sng          | pl           |
| 1  | b-ə-ktob     | m-n-ə-ktob   |
| 2m | b-t-ə-ktob   | b-t-ə-kətb-u |
| 2f | b-t-ə-kətb-i |              |
| 3m | b-y-ə-ktob   | b-y-ə-kətb-u |
| 3f | b-t-ə-ktob   |              |

Cowell (1964: 324) terms *b-* the ‘simple imperfect’. He also considers it an indicative marker. *b-* can be used for the future ‘but with no special emphasis on immediacy or on present involvement’ (1964: 324), as an enunciative for reporting an event or for conveying immediate information, and as an habitual. ‘Simple imperfect’ implies the unmarked imperfect. Damascene has two further imperfect prefixes which either substitute for *b-* (*raḥ* ‘anticipatory, future’) or can co-occur with but usually substitute for *b-* (*ʿam* ‘actuality’).<sup>17</sup> As Cowell formulates the formal relation between these three, ‘Without these particles [*raḥ*, *ʿam*] the imperfect *b-yəktob* is mainly used...’. Roughly speaking, unless the situation demands otherwise, the *b-* p-stem is used.

Cowell (1964: 179) contrasts forms with and without the *b-* prefix as indicative versus subjunctive. The subjunctive is used contrastively with the indicative in a number of contexts (1964: 344–58).

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (14) indicative                    | subjunctive                        |
| <i>mə-n-rūḥ ʿa-s-sinama</i>        | <i>Ø-n-rūḥ ʿa-s-sinama</i>         |
| <i>b-1pl-go to-the-cinema</i>      | <i>Ø-1pl-go to-the-cinema</i>      |
| ‘We’ll go to the movies’           | ‘Let’s go to the movies’           |
| <i>ʔaḷla b-i-waffʔ-ak</i>          | <i>ʔalla Ø y-waffʔ-ak</i>          |
| God <i>b-3-make successful-you</i> | God <i>Ø-3-make successful-you</i> |
| ‘God will grant you success’       | ‘May God grant you success’        |

There are contexts where only the subjunctive can be used. These include after modals, many of them epistemic, deontic, or estimative, and aspectual predicates, including *bədd* ‘want’, *lāzim* ‘must’, *yəmkən* ‘might’, *ʔədər* ‘be able’, *bada* ‘begin’, *nšāḷla* ‘God willing, I hope’, *ʔaḥsan* ‘it is better’, as well as after certain subordinating conjunctions like *ʔawwal ma* ‘as soon as’ and *bass* ‘as soon as, provided that’.

- (15) *ana bədd-i Ø ə-rʔaʿ ʿa-l-bēt*  
 I wish-my 1-return to-the-house (\**bərʔaʿ*)  
 ‘I want to return home’  
*ʔawwal ma Ø tə-ži*  
 first 2-come  
 ‘as soon as you get here’

<sup>17</sup> i.e. *raḥ yəktob* (\**raḥ b-yəktob*), but either *ʿam b-yəktob* or *ʿam yəktob*. In Nabk in west-central Syria on the other hand, *ʿam* does not combine with *b-*, forming a commutational class with it (Gralla 2006: 126).

A slightly different *b-* paradigm is found around Aleppo and in the Horan region of south-western Syria (Behnstedt 1997a: 320–1), as well as in Amman Arabic (Al-Wer 2014) in which in the 3rd-person forms beginning with a vowel, the invariable (in the indicative) *b-* is suffixed directly to the p-stem rather than to *y-*:

- (16) *bi-ktub* ‘he writes’  
*bi-kutb-u* ‘they write’

As in G, the *m-n*, 1pl allomorphic forms are attested throughout the Levant and into Egypt. Inter alia, it is found, as here, in Damascene, in Çukurova in south-central Turkey (Procházka 2002a: 114), Mḥarde in central Syria (Yoseph 2012: 78), in Salṭ in Jordan (Herin: 16 *m-ni-ḥči* ‘we say’), in the western Delta region of Egypt, as well as in isolated locations in the eastern Delta (B&W 1985b: 222).<sup>18</sup> This form, moreover, may have once been present in Cairene (Spitta-Bey 1880: 204).

As far as Egyptian *b-* goes, it is similar to Levantine in the key comparative parameters relevant to this study, so that description can be kept to a minimum. For illustration I use Cairene (Mitchell 1956 and Woidich 2006a: 273–82).

- (17) Cairene Arabic, p-stem conjugation, indicative

	sng	pl
1	<i>b-a-ktib</i>	<i>bi-n-i-ktib</i>
2m	<i>bi-t-i-ktib</i>	<i>bi-t-i-ktib-u</i>
2f	<i>bi-t-i-ktib-i</i>	
3m	<i>bi-y-i-ktib</i>	<i>bi-y-i-ktib-u</i>
3f	<i>bi-t-i-ktib</i>	

In its function Cairene *b-* shares with Damascene the habitual, enunciative (reporting an event, conveying immediate information) functions, as well as a historical present, but unlike what pertains in Damascene, the prefix *ḥa*, *ha*, *raḥ* is used as a future or for intentionality.

Also like Damascene, it shares contexts where *b-* cannot occur, where the Ø p-stem must be used, particularly after modal and aspectual predicates, many identical to those in (15), and in various types of adverbial dependent clauses (Mitchell 1956: 36, 80).

- (18) *b-a-ʔdar*    *ʔa-rūḥ* (never \**a-ʔdar*... *ba-rūḥ* or \**baʔdar b-a-rūḥ*)  
*b-1-be able*    1-go  
‘I can go’

Also like Damascene, in main clauses *b-* contrasts with Ø in having an indicative, assertional meaning, versus Ø, which implies an optative or indirect command.

<sup>18</sup> And perhaps historically in Kormakiti Arabic of Cyprus as well. Borg (1985: 101) notes that *pi* < \**b-* has the allomorph *man-* in the 1pl, *man-nakol* ‘we eat’. *man* is perhaps \**ma-m*. *ma* is attested in Çukurova Arabic, which Procházka (2002a: 114) derives from \**ammāl* > \**ma*. Çukurova also has the 1pl *m-* allomorph of *b-*, though in paradigmatic relation to *ma-*. Cypriot *man-* could have arisen via dissimilation from *m-* and assimilation to the following *n-*.

- (19) *bi-yi-ddi-l-hum xabar*  
*b-3-give-to-them news*  
 'He is giving them news'  
*yi-ddi-l-hum xabar*  
*3-give-to-them news*  
 'He is to let them know' (Mitchell 1956: 84)

Woidich summarizes a number of what he terms 'modal' uses of the Ø p-stem (2006a: 275–7) which he divides into two broad categories, epistemic (knowing) and deontic (obligation). These two values largely overlap with what in the Levantine literature is termed the subjunctive value of the Ø p-stem. Woidich's distinction, however, is useful for understanding a slightly contrasting situation described for Nigerian Arabic in the next section (§8.3.3). Woidich also notes that the Ø p-stem can be used for general truths, hence its frequent use in proverbs and sayings and with adverbs such as *dayman* 'always' and *ṭūl* 'umṛak' 'your whole life'.

Against these discrete usages contrastive with *b-* or complementary to it, Woidich also observes that where the proposition expresses a universal truth both *b-* and Ø p-stems may occur, i.e. that in this context the two are in free variation (2006a: 275). Furthermore, once a narrative is introduced in a *b-* form, subsequent p-stems can, optionally, occur in the Ø p-stem.

### 8.3.2.2 Summary

In this summary I do not distinguish Levantine and Egyptian (Cairene) Arabic. The parametricized classification of the Levantine/Egyptian situation is the simplest of those which will be considered. There are certain, syntactically defined contexts where only Ø occurs. Otherwise, Ø and *b-* exhibit a symmetrical semantic contrast: wherever *b-* and Ø can occur in the same context, a contrastive meaning results.

- (20) Parametricized values for L/E
- Form: *b-* ~ *m-* before n- 1pl
  - Status: Ø only after certain modal predicates (syntactic conditioning, 15, 18)  
*b-* versus Ø symmetrical semantic contrast (14, 19)  
*b-* versus Ø: indicative versus subjunctive  
 (Cairene: *b* ~ Ø universal truths)<sup>19</sup>
  - No *yibga/yibbi*

The L/E *b-* contrasts in a number of respects with that of G/N. In L/E, unlike G/N, the use of *b-* or Ø is close to being fully determined in the sense that the choice of one or the other is either syntactically conditioned or semantically contrastive. One might say that wherever Ø is not required either semantically (14, 19) or syntactically (15, 18), *b-* is used.<sup>20</sup> It is an unmarked indicative. Strikingly, the meaning of L/E *b-* is nearly diametrically opposed to that in G/N in that it is now an evidential marker

<sup>19</sup> I will not continue this value in the comparison, leaving its relevance for future work.

<sup>20</sup> Or one of the other p-stem prefixes, *ḥa-*, *ʿam* etc, which are not the immediate subject of this chapter.

used to describe actual, immediately occurring events. By the same token, whereas in G/N the Ø p-stem marks, *inter alia*, evidentiality, in L/E it is a modal subjunctive.

An initial comparison between G/N and L/E therefore gives rise to the following, central question: how did \**b-* change from being a marker of non-evidentiality, opposed to a Ø p-stem evidential, to one marking evidentiality, an unmarked indicative?<sup>21</sup> To elucidate this development I therefore turn to a third *b-* dialect.

### 8.3.3 CASE 3: NIGERIAN ARABIC (NA)

Nigerian Arabic has a curious split paradigm with *b-* obligatory in some persons, but not in others. In particular, it occurs regularly before inflected p-stem verbs beginning with a vowel (V-inflected p-stems, abbreviated here to *b-V*), but not before inflected p-stems beginning with a consonant (abbreviated here to *b-C*). A detailed look at this split leads to the conclusion that NA plays an essential interpretive role in explaining the transition from G/N *b-* to L/E *b-*.

#### 8.3.3.1 The data

The NA indicative paradigm is given in (21). In this section, many of the examples are taken from actual texts mostly available online, their source indexed in the example.

(21) NA indicative (p-stem)

	sng	pl
1	b-a-ktub	nu-ktub <sup>22</sup>
2m	tu-ktub	tu-ktub-u
2f	tu-ktub-i	tu-ktub-an
3m	b-u-ktub	b-u-ktub-u
3f	tu-ktub	b-u-ktub-an

Formally NA *b-* is, in those persons where it occurs, similar to Levantine Arabic in that it is suffixed directly before a vowel (16).<sup>23</sup> NA also has a Ø p-stem, which, as with L/E, is modally marked.

(22) NA Ø p-stem paradigm (speaker non-control)

	sng	pl
1	a-ktub	n-u-ktub
2m	t-uktub	t-u-ktub-u
2f	t-u-ktub-i	t-u-ktub-an
3m	i-ktub	i-ktub-u
3f	t-u-ktub	i-ktub-an

<sup>21</sup> As Eksell notes (2006a: 84) the shift from a volitional, non-evidential future to an indicative, evidential is not an attested grammaticalization trajectory.

<sup>22</sup> In addition, the 1sng may be realized variationally by *nuktub*, 'I write' (Owens 1998), in which case it has the same properties as the 1pl, i.e. the contrast between indicative and subjunctive is formally neutralized.

<sup>23</sup> Even though the ancestors of today's NA came from Upper Egypt.

The meaning of the Ø p-stem can roughly be termed ‘subjunctive’. In this it parallels L/E quite closely (cf. (14) and (19)). The Ø p-stem in NA is more focussed than it is in L/E, however, as it is used in cases when to convey a lack of control over the proposition is intended. Control is usually wrested from the speaker, as in (23b, 24, 25), but in theophoric wishes it is the speaker him/herself who has no control. It clearly falls into Woidich’s deontic, not epistemic, category of meanings.

- (23a) *alla i-bārik-ak (\*b-ibārikak)*  
 God 3-bless-you  
 ‘May God bless you’ (i.e. the speaker has no ability to confer the blessing)
- (23b) *yā i-mši (\*b-imši)*  
 don’t 3-go  
 ‘He shouldn’t go’

Its more common distribution is in various dependent clauses, where the subject of the subjunctive verb is typically also a co-referential subject or object constituent in the matrix clause. Minimal pairs between indicative and subjunctive illustrate this (cf. (19)).

- (24) *gūl ley-a b-u-ktub-a*  
 say to-him b-PV-write-it  
 ‘Tell him that he is writing it’
- gūl ley-a i-ktub-a<sup>24</sup>*  
 say to-him 3-write-it  
 ‘Tell him to write it/he should write it’ (subjunctive)

Generally in discourse Ø is used to express indirect orders, intentions, purpose, and hypothetical situations. An extended sequence of Ø p-stems is illustrated in (25).

- (25) (D, Kinembagu)  
*inta t-i-gūl ley-a Ø-i-mši, wēn dugo Ø-i-l'allam, Ø-i-mši le*  
 you 2-PV-say to-him 3-go where then 3-learn 3-go to  
*al-balge, angumāti, aḡḡērē, Ø-i-sīr Ø-i-nzil*  
 Balge Ngumati Ajjeere 3-travel 3-decamp  
 ‘You’d tell him where should he go, where so that he learns [it]? Should he go to Balge, Ngumati, Ajjeere, should he go to a cattle camp<sup>25</sup>?’

The *b-* p-stem, on the other hand, is unmarked and occurs wherever the meaning of the Ø p-stem is not relevant. If its function is contrastive to the modally marked Ø p-stem, it can be thought of as a general indicative. This situation parallels very closely that of L/E, but with two important differences.

First, unlike L/E, *b-* is used in various dependent clauses, for instance as complement of various modal and aspectual predicates such as *doole* ‘must’, *gidir* ‘be able’,

<sup>24</sup> The preformative vowel is realized as *i-* if word initial in the subjunctive.

<sup>25</sup> *isīr inzil* lit. ‘he should go and decamp’ is a shorthand expression for nomadizing. *sār* is a typical predicate applied in particular for ‘moving nomadically’ and when the nomads move from place to place, they ‘descend’, *nizil*, to a new camp.

*rād* or *dawwar* ‘want’, and *bada* ‘begin’. Note here that in contrast to L/E, NA *b-* is used for epistemic modality.

- (26) *b-a-gdar*      *b-a-mši*  
       *b-1-be able*   *b-1-go*  
       ‘I can go’

This contrasts with (15) and (18). In terms of the parametricized values used thus far, NA *b-* is an instance of ‘symmetric semantic contrast’.

The second difference with L/E is more fundamental and because it is argued that it forms a historical missing link with G/N *b-*, it requires detailed individual explanation.

### 8.3.3.2 Propositional adjacency

As can be seen, in the paradigm in (21), there is an odd asymmetry in the indicative paradigm, namely that *b-* occurs only before a p-stem verb beginning with a vowel, the V-initial p-stem. Where the inflected stem begins with a consonant, *b-* is not obligatory, and generally does not occur. There are no studies available detailing the grammar of *b-* in the context *b-C*, where C = the p-stem prefix *t-* (2nd person and 3fsng) or *n-* (1pl). Given that in the argument of this chapter, understanding of this distribution provides an important missing link between G/N and L/E, descriptive detail follows.

In fact, it is not correct that *b-* does not occur before C-initial p-stems, as I have termed them. It does.

- (27) *b-C*-initial inflected p-stem:
- |    |                     |                      |
|----|---------------------|----------------------|
|    | sng                 | pl                   |
| 1  | <i>baktub</i>       | <i>bi-nu-ktub</i>    |
| 2m | <i>bi-tu-ktub</i>   | <i>bi-tu-ktub-u</i>  |
| 2f | <i>bi-tu-ktub-i</i> | <i>bi-tu-ktub-an</i> |
| 3m | <i>buktub</i>       | <i>buktubu</i>       |
| 3f | <i>bi-tu-ktub</i>   | <i>buktuban</i>      |

In direct elicitation from consultants, no consistent meaning difference is apparent between the *b-C*-initial inflected p-stems and the V-initial inflected p-stems, except that in common with the *b-V* verb (1), *b-C* does not occur in the speaker non-control contexts just defined. In traditional descriptive terms, *b-C* and  $\emptyset$ -C are in free variation. In particular, whereas lack of *b-* implies subjunctive before a V-initial p-stem, lack of *b-* before a C-initial p-stem does not.

However, as will be seen, free variation in a historical linguistic framework can be indicative of important diachronic linguistic processes, so in this section I would like to define the occurrence of *b-/∅-C*-initial inflected stems much more carefully. This is possible thanks to a large, readily searchable corpus of NA. The corpus was the basis of various sociolinguistic and other studies on NA (e.g. Owens 1998b), and is downloadable in both transcription and audio format at the website (Owens and Hassan) given in the bibliography. It consists of about 250,000 words. The numbers reference the texts from which the examples are taken.

In quantitative terms the occurrence of *b*-C is rare. In the 250,000 words there are only 134 tokens with *b*-C.

Still, a careful look at the occurrences of *b*-C reveals an interesting pattern which, it will be argued, is crucial for understanding the development of the *b*-Ø, indicative-subjunctive contrast in general in Arabic.

### 8.3.3.2.1 Distribution of *b*-C

A basic observation is that *b*-C is optional, as the following passage shows.

(28) TV70, Abiso

S: *ti-čall-ū-ha bādēn*

2-cut-pl-it(f) then

‘After you cut crops, what then?’

AB: *be-nu-lumma-ha, nulumma-ha fi l madák, dugo nu-dugga-ha, wa dugo bə-darṛ-ū-ha, dugo ni-šīl-ha ni-ḡīb-haʔ, nu-dugg-ha fi l madák, fi n naga, wa be-ni-šīl-ha ni-ḡībaʔ, ni-šīl-he fōg kōro, kōro a, himār*

‘We gather it, we gather it on an open area, then we thresh it, then they winnow it, then we take it and bring it and beat it on the open area, on the flat plain and we carry it and bring it... we carry it on a donkey, a donkey’

The question is about planting and harvesting. It is responded to directly with a *b*-C form, followed by two Ø-C, and then a second *b*-C form, followed by three Ø-C verbs. The first token of *b*-C is followed by the same verb, without *b*-C. The second token of *b*-C is one in a sequence of actions, the previous two of which are represented by Ø-C verbs. *dugó*, which often introduces a sequenced action (see (29)), occurs three times in this segment, once followed by *be*-, twice without it.

Though these forms are optional, looking at all 134 tokens in the corpus it becomes clear that the distribution is not random. Three categories can be distinguished. A common meaning informing nearly all usages is to draw out a relation of some kind—sequential, resultative/causal, or a situational-rhetorical contrast—between Proposition A and the following Proposition B, marked with the *b*- morpheme on the verb.

8.3.3.2.1.1 Sequenced event The first category of *b*-C forms occurs in a sequence of events. In nearly half of all *b*-marked tokens, sixty-one in all, the sequencing is signalled by an explicit discourse marker or conjunction: *dugó* or *dugōnī* ‘then’, *hu/haw/ho* ‘and’, *kan* or *ka* ‘and so, and thus’ (Owens 1991), *dada* or *dadda* ‘then’, *xalās* ‘finished, completion marker’, *kula* ‘as well, even’. Ø sequential marking also occurs.

(29) MA TV71, Gulduba

*be-ni-čalli al-wāra dugōni be-ni-ḡarriḥ-e, dugōni be-na-xadim*

*b-1pl-cut def-bush then b-1pl-furrow-it(m) then b-1pl-work*

*n-ākul, waiʔ*

1pl-eat yep

‘We cut down the bush then we make furrows in it then we work and eat, yep’

- (30) F, TV72 Rafaa  
*ni-širi le-a dōrī ho m-nə-xud'd'-a,*  
 1pl-buy for-it(m) dried meat and b-1pl-put-it(m)  
 'We buy dried meat for it and put it in'
- (31) MA, TV71, Gulduba  
*ni-harit fi-ha, wa dada be-n-ākul fi-he*  
 1pl-farm in-it(f) and then b-we-eat in-it(f)  
 '(Yes, village land here) we farm on it, then we eat from it'

In a number of the examples, once a *b-C* is introduced in the sequential chain, subsequent predicates are, automatically as it were, equally marked by *b-* (29). In all there are twelve tokens of repeated *b-* marking.

Not infrequently in these contexts *b-C* follows a time adverbial clause, 'when, after', the resulting relation thereby being marked by *b-C*.

- (32) AB, TV72b, Rafaa  
*akād aḡ-ḡidād bi-bki da, kan be-ti-ḡib-han ti-dissa-han*  
 when def-cock 3-cry dem then b-2-bring-them(f) 2-put-them(f)  
*min aḡ-ḡubḡān,*  
 from def-flies  
 'When the cock crows, then you bring them and put them [in the house] away from the flies, like at this time'

8.3.3.2.1.2 *Reason, result, cause* In a second category of usage *b-C* signals either that Proposition B is the result of A, or that A is the reason or cause for B.<sup>26</sup> Which of these relations is operable in a given token is not always easy to distinguish, so these are included together in a single class.

In some cases *b-C* signals that the predicate explains the cause of the preceding circumstance. In the following, after declaring that the grain buried in the ground does not spoil, AB goes on to explain how it is protected, i.e. why it does not spoil, introducing the explanation with a *b-C* form.

- (33) AB, TV72b Rafaa  
*ma ti-talaḡ, ma ti-talaḡ be-ni-diss le-he širgāniyye nu-ṣubḡa-ha*  
 not 3f-spoil not 3f-spoil b-1pl-insert to-it(f) mat 1pl-pour-it(f)  
*hu nə-difin-e fi t-tārāb,*  
 and 1pl-bury-it(f) in def-earth  
 'It doesn't spoil. It doesn't spoil (because) we stick a mat for it and pour it in and bury it [grain in mat] in the ground'

<sup>26</sup> In a sense this class could be seen as a logical subclass of the previous, 'sequential'. Here the sequence is of a logical sort, given A, then B, though often the sequence has a direct temporal progression. In (33) for instance, burying the grain has the effect that it is preserved (hence resultative), but it must first be buried, before one can see the effects so described.



## (34) TV57a

*kēf ta-nsa hi, be-ta-ǧūlus be kalām al-arab*  
 how 3f-forget she b-3f-speak with word def-Arabic  
 'How could she forget (Arabic)?! She speaks Arabic'

Here the speaker is replying to the suggestion that an Arab woman married to a non-Arab will forget her language. How can she forget it, given that she will always be speaking Arabic?

Reason and result usages are also associated with typical morphemes and/or grammatical constructions, for instance the following.

## (35) Preceding conditional clause, TV57a

*kan iǧil wahid dugo waddar fi kadādi kula be-na-ʔarf-a bas*  
 if calf one then 3m-get lost in bush even b-1pl-know-it just  
 'Even if a calf should get lost in the bush we just know it'

It is relevant in this context to note that *b*-C occurs in both condition and result clauses, though only to a relatively small degree: three tokens in the condition, eight in the result part of a conditional clause.

8.3.3.2.1.3 *Situationally defined linkages* A third, smaller domain of usage can be termed 'situationally defined linkage'. The *b*-marked proposition is not obviously in a sequence of actions, nor is it linked in a logical cause-and-effect or resultative relation with the preceding proposition. Rather the *b*- signals a situationally defined conclusion to what was expressed immediately before. Here the predicate marked with *b*-C typically is the only one in the context so marked.

## (36) TV72 F, Rafaa

*anīna ārf-in kalām boṛno wēn, mā-na ārf-inn-e,*  
 we know.ap-pl language Kanuri where not-we know-pl-it(m)  
*be-ni-lfāhama tam*  
 b-1pl-understand perfect  
 'How would we know Kanuri? We don't. Still, we just understand one another perfectly'

Here *b*-C signals a reaction to the preceding proposition. In (36), the speaker comments on and qualifies with *b*-C her own description of the state of affairs as they are: 'we don't understand it, but we still can understand each other/but that state of affairs doesn't stop us from understanding each other'.

Similarly, in (28), AB marks his response with *b*-C, 'we just gather it up'. *b*-C signals that the state of affairs the interviewer asks about is being commented upon.

8.3.3.2.1.4 *Others: summary* Finally, there are tokens which do not fit into any of the three previous categories, but also do not divide among themselves in any intuitive manner. For instance, in the following *b*- appears to mark a habitual:

## (37) IM38

*kūre al-mara al-bit ma bi-ta-šif ar-rāḡil*  
 formerly def-woman def-girl not b-3f-see def-man  
 'Formerly the woman or girl didn't see the man' (before a marriage)

Table 8.2 gives a count of the tokens in each of the four categories identified in this section.

**TABLE 8.2 *b*-C in Nigerian Arabic**

	Frequency	%	Co-occurring discourse marker
sequence	69	51	38
reason, result, cause	38	28	19
situationally defined	18	13	3
unclassified	11	8	2

### 8.3.3.3 Propositional adjacency pair marker

The common thread linking the first three classes is that *b*-C signals a close link between the proposition expressed by the *b*-marked verb, and the preceding discourse. In all instances it signals that the speaker is explicitly drawing a sequential link between the preceding proposition, and the current, *b*-marked proposition. The sequentiality may simply reflect the flow of the events themselves, or may signal a closer causal or resultative relation. Across speaker turns it may signal a specific attitude to what the interlocutor has just said. The *b*-C p-stem verb in NA is defined on a discourse-internal basis. It is cued by nothing outside of the discourse itself, but rather has the status of an adjacency pair, signaling a significant relationship between two adjacent propositions.

This function differs both from L/E and from G/N. It differs from L/E in being pragmatically, not syntactically or semantically, conditioned, and it differs from G/N in that its pragmatic value is discourse-internal. In G/N, *b*- references a relation between an external state of affairs and the speaker's assessment of that state. In NA, *b*-C links one clause to another. It is this contrast with G/N which will be argued to form a missing link in the transition of G/N to, ultimately, L/E. *b*-C is an element constrained by the sequential exigencies of discourse.

The *b*-C function is transitional in that it moves the locus of choice from being one between speaker and assessment of an external state of affairs, to one between speaker and the sequential flow of discourse. *b*- is now discourse-internal. This, it is inferred, smooths the way for *b*- marking any proposition in discourse, unless the individual semantics dictates otherwise. The NA *b*-C function is a transitional step that, as it were, filters out the external world, bringing *b*- into a discourse-immanent environment where its occurrence can be governed by syntactic factors, and where it can eventually assume the simple unmarked indicative function.

### 8.3.3.4 Dialectal *b*- in NA

The situation described in §8.3.3.3 for NA is presented as if it applied uniformly throughout all NA dialects. This is a convenient fiction on two counts. First, there is a large degree of sociolinguistic variation which 'governs' all uses of *b*-. In particular,

whereas in rural areas of Borno the alternation of  $b \sim \emptyset$  is roughly as described as in the given paradigms, in Maiduguri, home to at least 50,000 native NA speakers, owing to various factors discussed in detail in Owens 1998b,  $b \sim \emptyset$  is a sociolinguistic variable, i.e. one which defies simple, categorical, grammatical description. In particular, one finds many token uses of  $\emptyset$  which, according to the description given, should have  $b$ -. The 'slippage' into  $\emptyset$  where  $b$ - is expected was precisely quantified according to genre type, either formal interview or informal conversation. In the formal interviews the 'slippage' occurred in 1,018 out of 8,173 tokens or 12.5% of all tokens where  $b$ - is expected (Owens 1998b: 67) whereas in informal conversations 'slippage' occurred in only 140 of 8,374 tokens (1.7%).<sup>27</sup> The Maiduguri figures are explicable, as explained in Owens 1998b, by the fact that Maiduguri is home to migrants from different dialect areas. These include those from Chad, who have no  $b$ - at all (see (3)), and rural Nigeria which has  $b$ -. Mutual accommodation results in mixed usage, as reflected in token counts, particularly in interviews where the speaker is monitoring the mix of variants with an unknown outsider.

More importantly for current purposes, while  $b$ -C does occur in all NA dialects, there is a marked difference in its distribution between the Bagirmi dialect, located in the eastern part of Borno, and the western dialect. On the map (Map 8.1) the Bagirmi dialect is, roughly, the area to the right of the quadrilateral solid line, approximately the area between Banki in the south, following a line just west of Gulumba, and ending in the north in the area south of Ngala. The western dialect encompasses the remaining area of Arabic-speaking Borno. Differences between these two dialects are, in certain respects, striking. To give but one example, in CvCvC nouns and verbs the Bagirmi dialect has iambic stress, the western trochaic, e.g. *bagár* 'cattle' (iambic) versus *bágar* (trochaic). This contrast is otherwise in Arabic dialectology held to fundamentally mark a western (North African = iambic) versus eastern (trochaic) difference (Hellmuth 2013: 60–1). The Bagirmi pattern represents, for the Sudanic region, a *Sprachinsel* in this respect, but also in respect of a good number of further differences (summarized in Owens 1998b, Owens and Hassan 2008: 715).<sup>28</sup>

The Bagirmi dialect spills over from the Cameroon border, and is located in an area which for a large part of the year, from as soon as the rains come in June until October, is largely cut off from the rest of the world.<sup>29</sup> It is an area in which, at the time of the interviews in the mid-1990s, much of the population was still monolingual in Arabic. In the nine interviews there are three women, none of whom had ever left the Bagirmi area. It is isolated both linguistically and geographically. It also appears that the Bagirmi dialect represents an older migration into the area than does

<sup>27</sup> Persson (2008: 27, n. 4), citing Eksell 2006a: 81 'documentation is somewhat scanty', notes that in Owens 1993, which is a straightforward grammar of NA, the usage of  $b$ - is 'rather unclear'. Leaving aside a close reading of this work, Owens 1993 was based on incipient, variationist data, which was interpretatively problematic, and whose problematicity was a reason for Owens 1998: 51–8.

<sup>28</sup> Others include  $*h/^a > he/^e$ ,  $*t > s$ , -han '3fpl object' and intrusive -in before pronoun object in participles (see Holes's chapter, this volume).

<sup>29</sup> See in text collection, the translated TV112 Mada, where accessibility to the village only by boat during the rainy season is described.



MAP 8.1 Arabic-speaking areas of north-eastern Nigeria and Cameroon

western NA, which probably came largely in the nineteenth century from Chad, with Al-Kanemi (see Braukämper 1994 for discussion).

A closer look at the distribution of the *b*-C pattern shows that solely in quantitative terms *b*-C is much more common in Bagirmi than in the western dialect: 92 versus 42 tokens. This is despite the fact that there are more texts, more total words, from the western area than from Bagirmi. Moreover, the various discourse markers which frequently accompany the *b*-C p-stem are far more frequent in Bagirmi than in western NA: 49 versus 14. The *b*-C pattern is more frequent and more integrated into the grammar of the Bagirmi dialect than it is in western NA. To underscore the point that in fact *b*-C in Bagirmi Arabic is not uncommon, I counted all of the occurrences of *b*-C in the four main villages from my sample where Bagirmi Arabic is spoken (Gulumba, Mingele, Raafá, Guldubá, all data available online) and all tokens of Ø-C-initial inflected p-stem verbs, i.e. all contexts where *b*-C potentially could occur. *b*-C occurs in 51 tokens<sup>30</sup> in these texts, Ø-C alone in 168, giving an average of 23% *b*-C (51/219) usage. In the context of these observations it is certainly not coincidental that the only area where the *b*- ~ *m*- alternation is attested before the 1pl prefix is in the Bagirmi area (see (30)).

For present purposes, the interpretation of these inner-NA differences is twofold. Either NA once had *b*-C more widely, and it is slowly receding, with the rather isolated Bagirmi area maintaining it to a higher degree, or *b*-C is basically a Bagirmi

<sup>30</sup> It might be asked why not all ninety-two tokens of *b*-C come from these villages. Bagirmi speakers were reckoned according to origin, not current residence, and the bulk of the textual data overall comes from speakers in Maiduguri (see Owens 1998: chapter 5 for details). For instance, one household in Maiduguri where a number of recordings were made has its rural roots in the Bagirmi area, and ten of the *b*-C tokens come from this source alone. Nearly half of the 'Bagirmi' *b*-C tokens are thus from speakers who are today resident in Maiduguri and these are not counted in this last statistic.

trait, which has spread via internal migration throughout NA. The lesser degree of integration into the grammar of the language is a reflex of this later introduction. While the argument about the status of the NA *b*-C reflex does not stand on the point, I find the latter position the stronger one, so that I would regard the variable occurrence of *b*- in the *b*-C context to be part of the *Sprachinsel*-like status of Bagirmi Arabic.<sup>31</sup>

Following through on this last assumption, NA basically can be seen as having two functions for *b*-. On the one hand, before a vowel *b*- marks indicative and occurs unless a subjunctive, Ø-marked meaning is required. On the other, before a C-initial inflected p-stem, *b*- marks a propositional adjacency pair. The latter function is particularly strongly embedded in the older, Bagirmi dialect.

Barring a closer analysis of the dialectal differences in NA, however, I will continue to refer to the *b* ~ Ø alternations as pan-NA, even if the important *b*-C alternation in the sense of marking propositional adjacency may be dialectally specific.

### 8.3.3.5 Summary

Overall, the occurrence of *b*- in NA is, obviously, more complicated than in either G/N or L/E, since it has two very different functions, one before the -V p-stem, one before the -C inflected p-stem. Overall it can be summarized as follows.

- (38) Parametricized values for NA
- a. Form: *b*-, ~ *m*- n- 1pl
  - b. Status: *b*-V symmetric semantic contrast  
           *b*-V versus Ø-V: indicative versus subjunctive  
           *b*-C asymmetric pragmatic (optional)
  - c. No yibga/yibbi

In NA Ø-V is a semantically specific modal form signalling lack of subject control. It falls within the subjunctive meanings of L/E. *b*-V on the other hand is the unmarked indicative which otherwise occurs. Before -C- p-stems, *b*- alternates optionally with Ø- to produce discourse-pragmatic nuances.

### 8.3.4 CASE 4: ŞAN<sup>ə</sup>Ā<sup>ə</sup>, YEMEN

The status of *bi*- in Şan<sup>ə</sup>Ā<sup>ə</sup> Arabic is described in some detail by Watson (1993: 63–83, 151–61).

The p-stem is either marked by *bi*- or not. In the 1sng *bi*- has the allomorph *bayn*-.

<sup>31</sup> While elucidating this point in detail is beyond the scope of this chapter, I believe that often usages which fall outside of the core contexts of §8.3.3.2.2, i.e. the thirteen errant tokens as it were, are by speakers who are implicitly referencing Arabic varieties which they know from outside Nigeria, which regularly use the *b*- indicative (see e.g. L/E in §8.3.2). The speaker in IM38 in (37), for instance, lived in the Sudan, and marks her speech with clear non-Nigerian Sudanisms such as *zāt* for ‘self’ (NA *rās* or *dumt*), *hāğa* ‘thing’ (*šay*), and *zey* ‘like’ (*šaba*). In three of her four tokens the *b*- carries no vowel, rather as if she is imitating Khartoum Arabic (*ma b-tafunda* ‘you don’t distinguish it’). To underscore the dialectal difference alluded to in this paragraph, this speaker is from western NA, and hence her tokens potentially should be excluded from the overall count.

(39) *Ṣanʿāʿ*

	sng	pl
1	(bayn)-a-lbas	(bi-)ni-lbas
2m	(bi-)ti-lbas	(bi-)ti-lbas-ū
2f	(bi-)ti-lbas-i	(bi-)ti-lbas-ayn
3m	(bi-)yi-lbas	(bi-)yi-lbas-ū
3f	(bi-)ti-lbas	(bi-)yi-lbas-ayn

Before *yi-*, \**b-* is realized variably as *bi-* (*bi-yi-šrab* ‘he smokes’) or *bī-* (*bī-xazzin* ‘he will chew’)(1993: 80, 81).

To describe the *Ṣanʿāni* p-stem, Watson uses a combination of formal and notional categories. These include ‘subjunctive’, ‘optative’, and ‘indicative’ on the notional side, and *b-* p-stem and bare-p-stem (here termed  $\emptyset$ -p-stem) on the formal. However, the notional terms are not well defined,<sup>32</sup> and the bare-p-stem in particular realizes both subjunctive and indicative meanings (1993: 67–77).<sup>33</sup>

However, the facts on the ground are indeed complicated. Watson notes that in a number of contexts (1993: 82–3) *b-* and  $\emptyset$  are in free variation.

- (40) *wa maṭalan ti-sʿal-ī-ni* (= *bi-tisʿalīni*)  
 and for instance 2-ask-f-me  
 ‘For example, you (f) ask me’ (1993: 82)

I had occasion to check all of Watson’s examples with a native speaker of *Ṣanʿāni* Arabic<sup>34</sup> with the explicit brief of asking whether in a given example  $\emptyset$ - instead of the given *bi-* could be used, or vice versa. While intuitions differed on individual examples, overall there was broad agreement with Watson. More free variation was allowed than in Watson, though this is perhaps because the examples were decontextualized.<sup>35</sup> For purposes of the current analysis, in any case, a key point appears to be that *bi-* and  $\emptyset$  alternate freely in a large number of contexts in *Ṣanʿāni* Arabic, though as with the previous two case studies, there are also contexts where  $\emptyset$  must occur. I begin with these.

It appears that in positions where a verb is directly dependent on another verb (except *kān* ‘be’),  $\emptyset$  is preferred. The main verb has a modal or aspectual value, e.g. *ḡilis* ‘keep on X’ +  $\emptyset$  p-stem, *zād* ‘do again’ + p-stem, *yišti* ‘want’ (1993: 70, 72, 159):

<sup>32</sup> Indicatives are termed ‘assertions’ (1993: 71), though the terminology is mentioned in passing with no detailed discussion.

<sup>33</sup> To indicate one aspect of the descriptive problem, complements of predicates of higher modal and aspectual verbs such as ‘do again’ which are always  $\emptyset$ -marked (1993: 71–2) are termed indicative, though being in a dependent, determined position, it is not clear how the dependent verb can be assertive independently of the higher governing predicate.

<sup>34</sup> Sarah Raboi, a PhD candidate at Bayreuth University.

<sup>35</sup> For instance (1993: 79), *axī sulṭān bī-gallid* (= *igallid dimm* ‘my brother Sultan is imitating a cat’, *allaḡī bi-štari wa yiqbaḡ* (= *byiqbaḡ*) ‘and he who buys and slaughters...’. However, it should be noted that Watson only implies that many of her *b-* examples require *b-* in that she summarizes the many contexts where *b-* occurs. She does not explicitly say that  $\emptyset$  could not be used instead in her *b*-indicative examples.

- (41) *bayn-a-zīd Ø-a-bsir*  
*b-1-increase Ø-1-look*  
 ‘I will take another look’ (1993: 159) (\**bayn-a-bsir*)

Ø and *b-* can contrast semantically, with Ø conveying a subjunctive or optative meaning (see (14) and (19)).

- (42) *alla Ø - yi-ʕaawin-iš*  
 God 3-help-you (f)  
 ‘May God help you’  
 versus  
*alla bi-yi- ʕaawin -iš*  
 God b-3-help-you (f)  
 ‘God will help you’

In optatives, the Ø-p-stem occurs.

- (43) *allāh Ø yi-ftaḥ ʕalay-k*  
 God 3-open on-you (m)  
 ‘May God give you’ (1993: 75) (\**bi-yiftaḥ*)

Watson notes the following contrast, which recalls NA and L/E (see (19), (24)).

- (44) *gāl Ø yi-ddī li-h ʕašarih riyāl*  
 3-said 3-give-to-him ten riyal  
 ‘He said he should give him ten riyals’  
*gāl bi-yi-ddī li-h ʕašarih riyāl*  
 3-said b-3-give-to-him ten riyal  
 ‘He said he would give him ten riyals’

Working through Watson’s examples with the consultant, contexts were found where *b-* but not Ø was accepted. One context with a promising semantic background concerned what might be termed ‘situational immediacy’. In the following two examples reference is to what is immediately happening, and in both only *b-* was considered acceptable (in agreement with Watson).

- (45) *limā bi-ta-ʕkal*  
 Why b-2-limp  
 ‘Why are you limping?’ (1993: 80)  
 (\**limā Ø-ta-ʕkal*)
- (46) *ḥayyā ma bi-ti-bsir*  
 Come on what b-2-see  
 ‘Come on, what can you (msng) see?’ (1993: 80)  
 (\**ḥayyā ma Ø-ti-bsir*)

Nonetheless, it appears that defining general contexts where *b-* but not Ø can be used requires greater study than has thus far been devoted to the issue. If *b-* is defined as an ‘immediacy’ marker, for instance, there are cases such as (40) where *b-* versus Ø does not mark immediacy.

While it would be possible to build into the representation in (47) a *b-* only condition, this will not be done here, given the uncertain linguistic conditions required for an adequate specification. Instead it appears that the free alternation between *b-* and  $\emptyset$  is reminiscent, in purely formal terms, of the NA *b-C* initial context (§8.3.3.3). There is, however, an important difference, and that is that in the case of NA a discourse-pragmatic value for the use of *b-C* was defined. In the current Şan‘āni data, with possible specific exceptions as discussed ((45), (46)), this is not the case. Instead, one value of *b-* ~  $\emptyset$  alternation will be represented as free variation.

The normed variational parameters for the Şan‘āni data are therefore as follows. There are syntactic contexts where only  $\emptyset$  occurs (41), and there are contexts where  $\emptyset$  and *b-* are contrastive (42). The Şan‘āni data adds a new twist. There are a not inconsiderable number of cases where *b-* and  $\emptyset$  are in free variation. Whereas this situation was also observed in Egyptian for the ‘universal truth’ meaning (see discussion after (19)), in Şan‘āni the instances where, in a consultant session, both *b-* and  $\emptyset$  produce identical meanings are more numerous. Without more research they cannot be limited to a constrained context. In the normalized (47), this situation is thus termed ‘symmetrical, no contrast’, i.e. both *b-* and  $\emptyset$  can occur in the given context, but there is no semantic contrast in the use or non-use of *b-*. It is a case of free variation.

- (47) Parametricized values for Şan‘āni
- a. Form: *b-* (no *m-*)<sup>36</sup>
  - b. Status:  $\emptyset$  only after certain predicates (syntactic conditioning)  
*b-* versus  $\emptyset$  symmetrical semantic contrast  
*b* ~  $\emptyset$  symmetrical, no contrast = free variation
  - c. No *yibga/yibbi*

Where  $\emptyset$  is not determined either syntactically or semantically, it is in free variation with *b-*. This domain of free variation is large enough that it is difficult to apply the indicative versus subjunctive parameter to Şan‘āni.

It should be said that one further condition may be relevant, and that is that free variation between *b-* and  $\emptyset$  could result from the presence in Şan‘ā’ of speakers originally (i.e., them or their ancestors) using *b-* or  $\emptyset$  dialects. The Tihāma region west of Şan‘ā’ is a  $\emptyset$  area (see (3)), whereas the Şan‘ā’ area itself is a *b-* area. If *b* ~  $\emptyset$  is only weakly contrastive, this situation could have been produced by speakers accommodating to non-*b* speakers for whom typically *b-* functions are expressed as  $\emptyset$ . A model for mutual accommodation, producing mixed forms whose precise grammatical functions are hard to pin down because a given form (e.g.  $\emptyset$ ) could mean different things to different speakers, is described for Maiduguri (Owens 1998b and discussion in §8.3.3.4). Only dedicated sociolinguistic investigation will throw

<sup>36</sup> Though in his discussion of Yemeni Arabic within West Arabian, Rabin (1951: 37, see also Kampffmeyer 1900: 36) makes the interesting observation that *am* or *ʔam-* as a pre-verbal p-stem marker is attested in old lexica and that the citations are given with the 1pl, albeit with *am* not immediately pre-verb, i.e., *am naḥnu na-ṭʕamu* for ‘we eat’. Rabin specifically sees a possible link to the *m-n-* variant so widespread in contemporary Arabic.



further light on this matter as far as *Ṣanʿāʾ* goes, though if such a factor is in play, aligning *Ṣanʿāʾ* on a grammaticalization scale would be a purely formal exercise, without necessarily reflecting the historical development of *b-* in ancestral *Ṣanʿāʾ*.

### 8.3.5 CASE 5: UZBEKISTAN

A fifth and final case is represented by Uzbekistan Arabic,<sup>37</sup> which has a paradigm that uncannily parallels NA in having complementary indicative marking between -V-initial and -C-initial inflected p-stem verbs. Instead of *b-*, Uzbekistan has *m-* throughout the paradigm (see Zimmermann 2002: 35–40; 2009).

- (48) Uzbekistan 1, -qtil ‘kill’
- |    | sng        | pl         |
|----|------------|------------|
| 1  | m-a-qtil   | nə-qtil    |
| 2f | tə-qtil-în | tə-qtil-in |
| 2m | tə-qtil    | tə-qtil-ün |
| 3f | tə-qtil    | m-əqtil-in |
| 3m | m-əqtil    | m-əqtil-ün |

As in NA, the *b*-prefix (here = *m-*) occurs before a V-initial p-stem verb, but not before a C-initial stem (see (21)). Also parallel to the Nigerian and Levantine/Egyptian dialects, the *m-* forms represent an indicative, against the *m*-less forms which are modally marked.

- (49) *a-sū rūḥ-i*  
 1-make self-my  
 ‘I intend to change myself’

The paradigm in (48), however, ostensibly functions today in a different way from the NA. *m-* does not occur if the p-stem verb form begins with -CV. Otherwise it does. ‘Otherwise’ includes either a -V initial inflected stem, or in the so-called hollow or doubled verb, whose p-stem uniformly begins with V-CV or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>V, where C<sub>1</sub> is a p-stem personal prefix, *n-* or *t-* (see Zimmermann 2002: 35–40; 2009, Fischer 1961: 249).

- (50) Uzbekistan 2, -qūl ‘say’
- |    | sng         | pl          |
|----|-------------|-------------|
| 1  | m-a-qūl     | mi-n-qūl    |
| 2f | mi-t-qūl-în | mi-t-qūl-in |
| 2m | mi-t-qūl    | mi-tqūl-ün  |
| 3f | mi-t-qūl    | mi-qūl-in   |
| 3m | m-i-qūl     | m-i-qūl-ün  |

As for the origin of the *m-* variant, Ingham (1994b) suggests a Persian (Dari) origin for this morpheme (imperfective *mi-*). An alternative explanation is the

<sup>37</sup> Afghanistan also has offshoots of Uzbekistan Arabic, with which it is identical (Ingham 1994b, Kieffer 2000).

generalization of the 1pl allomorph *m-*. As seen, this allomorph is attested in Arabic dialects wherever the *b-* paradigm occurs, regardless of precise functionality. The presence of a morpheme with similar form and function would have abetted the spread of *m-* at the expense of *b-* in this case. Assuming the generalization of *m-* automatically accounts for one striking identity between the *b-* and 1pl *m-* prefixes, namely their common indicative value, against the subjunctive marked by deletion or lack of *b/m-*, the Persian contact explanation would have to posit the perfect adoption of indicative-subjunctive values after *mi-* has been introduced. The solution proposed here is therefore both simpler and more plausible than the putative sources which are postulated to underlie it.

In passing it can be noted that in the nearly extinct Djeinau dialect of south-central Uzbekistan a *b-* in the p-stem paradigm is reported (Fischer 1961: 247, n. 3).

Detailed data are lacking to give a complete parametricized summary of Uzbekistan Arabic. Still, its basic form and function fit in with what was witnessed among the other dialects. In particular there is an alternation between *m-* and  $\emptyset$  which is semantically contrastive. There is, however, an added variable, a phonological one in the current case, prohibiting *m-* from occurring before CV- p-stem prefixes.

- (51) Parametricized values for Uzbekistan Arabic
- a. Form: *m-* only
  - b. Status:  $\emptyset$  symmetric semantic contrast  
*m-* phonologically determined
  - c. No *yibga/yiba/yibbi*

The new phonological condition will be integrated into the discussion in §8.4.2.

## 8.4 RECONSTRUCTION

Having described, sometimes in detail, the various functions of *b-* in Arabic, it is now time to turn to a summary and to a reconstruction of how *\*b-* developed throughout Arabic.

### 8.4.1 CLASSIFICATION

It is assumed all *\*b-* paradigm reflexes (including the *m-* alternative in Uzbekistan) have a common origin. Starting with this, there are basically, i.e. allowing for minor sub-regularities, three reflexes of the reconstructed value of *\*b-* whose forms need to be explained. These can be termed the G/N value, the L/E value, and the NA—Uzbekistan value. The key elements of these are repeated from the individual summaries.

- (52a) Parametricized values of *b-* in G/N
- a. Form: *b-*, (Baḥārna) ~ *m-* before *n-* 1pl
  - b. Status: asymmetrical semantic (optional)  
non-evidential marker
  - c. *yibga/yiba/yibbi*

- (52b) Parametricized values for L/E
- Form: *b-*, ~ *m-* before *n- 1pl*
  - Status:  $\emptyset$  only after certain modal predicates (syntactic conditioning)  
*b-* versus  $\emptyset$  symmetrical semantic contrast  
*b-* versus  $\emptyset$ : indicative versus subjunctive  
(Cairene: *b* ~  $\emptyset$  universal truths)<sup>38</sup>
  - No *yibğa/yiba/yibbi*
- (52c) Parametricized values for NA
- Form: *b-*, ~ *m-* before *n- 1PL*
  - Status: *b-V* symmetric semantic contrast  
*b-V* versus  $\emptyset-V$ : indicative versus subjunctive  
*b-C* asymmetric pragmatic (optional)
  - No *yibğa/yiba/yibbi*
- (52d) Parametricized values for Şan‘āni
- Form: *b-* (no *m-*)
  - Status:  $\emptyset$  only after certain predicates (syntactic conditioning)  
*b- v.*  $\emptyset$  symmetrical semantic contrast  
*b* ~  $\emptyset$  symmetrical, no contrast = free variation
  - No *yibğa/yiba/yibbi*
- (52e) Parametricized values for Uzbekistan Arabic
- Form: *m-* only
  - Status:  $\emptyset$  symmetric semantic contrast  
*m-* phonologically determined
  - No *yibğa/yiba/yibbi*

The crucial classificatory parameters are: whether or not there is syntactic conditioning, and the nature of the *b-* ~  $\emptyset$  alternation. If it is symmetric and contrastive it is grammaticalized; if asymmetric (and therefore optional) it is not. Şan‘āni represents a special case here, however: the *b-* ~  $\emptyset$  alternation is symmetrical (both occur in the same contexts), but to a large extent the alternation is non-contrastive. According to these parameters, grammaticalization can be represented as in Table 8.3. I leave Uzbekistan aside for the moment, but will return to it in the next section, §8.4.2. In Table 8.3 on the first line I summarize in a short phrase or word the main grammatical status of *b-* in the given dialect.

TABLE 8.3 Grammaticalization of \**b-*, initial account

G/N	NA <i>b-C</i>	Şan‘ā <sup>9</sup>	NA <i>b-V</i> , L/E
Non-evidential asymmetrical optional	Propositional adjacency asymmetrical optional	<i>b</i> ~ $\emptyset$ indicative symmetrical but free optional	Indicative symmetrical obligatory

<sup>38</sup> I will not continue this value in the comparison, leaving its relevance for future work.

An important issue, then, is how one gets (metaphorically) from the optional asymmetry of G/N to the constrained grammaticality of L/E *b-*. It was argued that the NA value represents not only a typological value on a scale, but also a crucial link in the historical development of the grammaticized indicative value.

The NA propositional adjacency marker *b-* shares with G/N Arabic its optionality—one and the same thing can be expressed with and without *b-*. Moreover, a token count of *b-* in G/N (Table 8.1) and *b-C* in NA (Table 8.2) gave a relatively low percentage of *b-*: no more than 25%, but the upward trend goes in favour of NA, perhaps a sign that a more grammaticalized form is being ushered in.

There is, however, one important contrast, and that is that the NA Arabic pragmatic usage is based on a purely discourse-internal linkage: the speaker is free to use or not use *b-C*, but the freedom resides in using it to signal a relationship between propositions. By contrast, the G/N usage signals a relationship not between propositions, but between a proposition—and the speaker's evaluation of the proposition—and the outside world. In brief, *b-* changes from being a marker of a relationship with the outside world, to being a marker of a purely discourse-internal relationship.

It is the discourse-internal function which in turn provides the link to the complete grammaticalization of *\*b-* in the final stage. The presence of *\*b-* as an indicative marker is largely uncoupled from a direct link to the outside world. Propositions are as a rule marked by *b-* in the p-stem; if they aren't marked by *b-* there is a conditioning factor; in particular in Egyptian and Levantine Arabic, this factor is subordination to various classes of predicates. In NA the conditioning factor for *b-V* is entirely semantic, as it is in main clauses in L/E.

From this perspective, the contrastive function of *b-* versus  $\emptyset$ , indicative versus subjunctive in main clauses (see (14), (19), (24), (49)) is a vestige of an original link to the outside world, as in G/N, yet fundamentally reinterpreted to accommodate the 'new' reality of *b-*, that it is obligatorily meaningful in such a way that its use implies a well-profiled indicative or subjunctive meaning contrast.

#### 8.4.2 UZBEKISTAN: THE ROLE OF PHONOLOGY

One aspect of the reconstruction proposed thus far is that there is a one-to-one relation between what is reconstructed in the development of *b-* marking and attestations of each stage of development in contemporary Arabic: the living stages are also interpreted as points of reconstruction, a point I return to in §8.5. One variety which has not yet been fully integrated into the analysis, however, is Uzbekistan Arabic. Uzbekistan Arabic will, unfortunately, remain outside detailed discussion for the present, as the information we have about it is rather basic. However, in one respect I believe that it, too, contains important information about one aspect of the development of the grammaticalization of *\*b-* which has not yet been incorporated into the analysis. In particular, the asymmetrical p-stem paradigm in NA (see (21)), with *b-* sometimes obligatory depending on person, sometimes optional, is rather odd. Note that obligatoriness of *b-* in NA correlates solely with form: before a -V-initial p-stem verb *b-* is obligatory, in the senses and

conditions defined here, while before -C-initial inflected p-stem verbs it is optional. Contrary to what one might expect, the conditioning cuts across basic person, number, and gender categories. 1sng has obligatory *b-*, but *b-* is optional in the 1pl; 3msng has obligatory *b-* but in 3fsng it is optional, for instance. Still, the complementarity between the two conditions, obligatory and optional, described here is remarkably robust against the large-scale textual data on which the NA analysis is based.

It is here where Uzbekistan Arabic I believe helps us to understand this original development. As seen in (48), in contemporary Uzbekistan Arabic the occurrence of *m-*, the Uzbekistan equivalent of *\*b-*, is morphophonologically determined. Leaving aside paradigm (50) for the moment, it is clear that (48) reproduces the NA paradigm (21) exactly as far as the distribution of *\*b-* goes. This itself is interesting, given that the basic distribution of *\*b-* in these cases defies, as explained in the previous paragraph, any obvious morphological conditioning factor. That it is defied twice in regions separated by 4,000 miles (7,000 kilometres) is remarkable. It can therefore be suggested that originally the introduction of *b-* (or *m-* in the case of Uzbekistan) was a phonological regularization of the p-stem paradigm, such that *b-* is introduced wherever the p-stem verb begins with V, that is 1sng *a-*, and 3msng and 3pl *i-*. If the ancestral NA paradigm came into existence in the same ancestral population as did Uzbekistan Arabic (see next paragraph), then its 'odd' distribution of *b-* has a very straightforward phonological explanation.

There are two interpretive issues relating to the Uzbekistan Arabic case. First, it is claimed that the conditioning factor for the occurrence of *m-* is the same as for that of NA *b-*, namely, before a V-initial inflected p-stem verb. In the first person the *a-* is indisputably V-initial. In the 3rd person Arabic in general has basically two forms, one beginning with *y-*, i.e. a consonant (see (3)) and one with *i-* (as in (22)). As can be seen in the NA subjunctive paradigm, NA has *i-*. Uzbekistan Arabic expects *i-*, if the conditioning factor for the occurrence of *m-* is the correct one. As with NA, the value of the vowel is directly observable in the subjunctive marked by Ø. The data here are not completely clear, though I think they do bear out the expectation. Zimmermann (2002) gives data of two sorts. She summarizes the earlier work of Vinnikov, and she gives the result of her own fieldwork. Vinnikov gives two values for the 3rd-person form, *yi-* before CC (i.e. *yi-ktib*), but also *a-* before a CV stem, *a-qūl* 'he says'. Zimmermann, however (2002: 77–80) gives only *i-* in all cases, e.g. *i-mši* 'he goes', *i-mš-in* 'they (f) go', *i-lbis* 'he dresses', *a-ħitt* 'he puts'. While the *i-* form is definitely the minority form among Arabic dialects, it does also occur in all stems in some Anatolian Arabic dialects, e.g. Daragözü, Äzæx (Jastrow 1978: 232, 245), varieties which have been suggested to have a particularly close historical connection to Uzbekistan Arabic (Jastrow 1998). The *i*-realization of the preformative vowel before -CV stems, on the other hand, is quite widespread (e.g. Tripoli *iigūl* 'he says', (conventionally represented as [ygūl] so that one could get the impression that it is a *y-* initial form), *i-rudd* 'he returns', (Pereira 2008: 77, 85)). In written Arabic, of course, the prefix is always represented with a 'y'. The analysis can therefore be tentatively adopted that originally NA and Uzbekistan Arabic—here one is obviously talking about the common ancestor of

these varieties—first developed their ‘odd’ distributions of *b-/m-* under the influence of simple phonological conditioning.

The second issue with Uzbekistan Arabic is that in paradigm (50) the conditioning factors work differently from NA. *m-* is added before a C- when it occurs prefixed to a CV-initial p-stem verb (as in the hollow verbs illustrated in (50)). Explaining this difference probably leads to historical linguistic issues which require consideration of matters independent of the status of \*b-. The status of short vowels in general, and short high vowels in particular, is one of these (see Owens 2009: 49–67 and §8.6 for detailed discussion of key points in this regard). As soon as one moves away from the fiction that all Arabic varieties derive from an idealized CLA, establishing the linguistic history of ‘Arabic’ becomes complicated, to say the least, since it is not ‘Arabic’ as a whole which one interprets, but rather ‘Arabic’ on the basis of a large number of individual case studies. In the current case, it could be that ancestral Uzbekistan originally had a system akin to NA, but with the loss of an unstressed vowel in an open syllable (i.e. *\*ti-qūl > t-qūl*), a widespread phenomenon in Arabic, a typical repair mechanism set in adding an epenthetic vowel, creating a V-initial stem, which automatically called up the *m-* prefix. This, briefly, is one possible scenario, interpreting (50) as original, (48) the result of subsequent phonological changes. To address this issue adequately one needs both an overview of the status of short vowels in open syllables, and a more detailed study of Uzbekistan Arabic itself, including its linguistic history.

It is relevant to note here that sister languages to Arabic have in their history filled out V-initial p-stem verbs in ways analogous to what is proposed for Uzbekistan/NA. Syriac in particular generalized the prefix *n-*, otherwise 1pl, to 3rd-person V-initial forms:

(53) Syriac imperfect (Moscatti et al. 1964: 142)

sng	pl
1ʔe-qbor	ne-qbor
...	
3m ne-qbor	ne-qbur-ün
3f	ne-qbur-än

There are also smaller scale changes which apparently interact with morphological factors. For instance, the Ethio-Semitic language Harari (Wagner 1997: 497) generalized the 1pl *n-* to the 1sng in the jussive paradigm, in part via morphological regularization (see Owens 2003 for a similar case in North African Arabic) and possibly in part because of regularizing phonological factors. Similarly, in Ugaritic the 3fsng *t-* generalized to the 3fpl: *t-qbr → t-qbr-n*.

Sceptical though one can be about independent parallel development (see §8.4.3), in this case there appears to be a system-latent tendency to favour the creation of a regular CV p-stem in all persons, even if the extension occurred in only a minority of instances in Semitic.

## 8.4.3 THE FINAL RECONSTRUCTION

With this exposition the final element in the development of the *b-* p-stem can be integrated into the analysis. In contrast to the stages ‘reconstructed’ thus far, a stage needs to be postulated which is only partly in evidence among contemporary varieties. This is a stage between G/N and NA *b-C*, the evidence for whose existence is the regularization of the *b-* (or *m-*) in the paradigm as a phonological analogical extension to create a uniform CV p-stem paradigm. Very probably—though here there is no direct evidence, it has to be said—this regularization did accompany the shift from *b-* as a discourse-external element to *b-* as an internal marker of discourse coherency. That is, it was not only phonological regularization which occurred, but also in general *b-* moved to signal propositional adjacency. From this perspective, *b-* would have had a phonological motivation, as it were, to become regularly established in the paradigm, but initially its occurrence would have been irregular, in the same way that *b-C* is still irregular in NA. Whereas in L/E/U *b-* (*m-*) eventually became regular throughout the paradigm, NA took the phonological conditioning in a different direction, with paradigm regularity defined by a uniform C-V p-stem. C was either *b-* or one of the person markers *n-*, *t-*. This phonologically defined distribution takes precedence over the universal extension of the indicative value to *b-*.

What marks the middle stage of the *b-* development is the complementarity between *b-* and  $\emptyset$  defined phonologically. In both contemporary NA and in Uzbekistan Arabic this complementarity is overlaid by the functional differentiation of the *b-* forms into indicative (*b-*) and subjunctive ( $\emptyset$ ). A more complete representation of the essential elements in Table 8.4 is therefore as follows.

What is suggested here is that stage 2, the swing stage between G/N and L/E, was set in motion by two developments. One was the discourse-pragmatization of the *b-* (or *m-*), as described in §8.3.3.2. *b-* shifted from being a marker of non-evidentiality to one marking a relation of propositional adjacency. The second was the phonological impulse to create uniform C-V onsets throughout the inflected p-stem paradigm. The phonological basis of this development is still in evidence in Uzbekistan Arabic

TABLE 8.4 Reconstructed development of \*b-

Stage 1	2	3	4	5
G/N <i>b-</i>	*b- reconstructed but phonologically in evidence in Uzbekistan Arabic	NA <i>b-C</i>	Şan <sup>c</sup> ā <sup>2</sup> <i>b-</i>	NA <i>b-V</i> , L/E <i>b-</i>
non-evidential	*propositional adjacency	propositional adjacency	<i>b</i> ~ $\emptyset$ indicative	indicative
asymmetrical		asymmetrical	symmetrical but free variation	symmetrical
optional		optional	optional	obligatory

today. Stage 2 therefore can be divided into two parts, (a) a phonological motivation and (b) a discourse-pragmatic one. The discourse-pragmatic factor continues the optionality of the original G/N stage.

#### 8.4.4 FOUR OBJECTIONS

The reconstruction in Table 8.4 involves a number of moving parts, any number of which might be criticized from one perspective or another. It is therefore appropriate to play the devil's advocate and consider some possible objections to Table 8.4, as well as to elaborate on certain nuances in the current exposition.

##### 8.4.4.1 NA: propositional adjacency, a late development

Stage 3 plays an important role, as it is argued to provide the justification for interpreting the shift of *b-* from a discourse-external to a discourse-internal morpheme. Stage 3 is based on NA, and as seen, NA in fact has a split morphologization of *b-*, one wholly grammaticized before the V-p-stem, and a pragmaticized value before the *b-C* p-stem. An alternative explanation for the development of the *b-C* stem can be considered as follows. Originally the NA situation was like the Uzbekistan paradigm in (48), i.e. that originally *b-* did not occur before -C at all, and that what we witness today is an innovative extension of *b-* to the -C p-stem environment which occurred after ancestral NA split off from other ancestral varieties. The variability which is documented in §8.3.3.2 is an exponent of an incipient regularization of *b-* throughout the paradigm and therefore cannot be taken as evidence for the reconstruction as described here.

There are three responses to this perspective. First, note that this interpretation in any case requires acceptance of the stage 2 reconstruction, i.e. the NA p-stem was even closer to the reconstructed Uzbekistan paradigm (48) than it is today. Secondly, and crucially, the proposed alternative does not explain the *b- ~ m-* alternation, an important alternation which thus far has not been adduced as an interpretive element in understanding the history of *b-*. As is apparent, wherever *b-* occurs the allomorph *m-* also occurs before 1pl *n-*, except in Šan<sup>č</sup>ā<sup>?</sup> Arabic (though see n. 36). The simplest historical explanation to account for this alternation overall is that it came in with the grammaticalization of *yiba*, and was carried forward by all subsequent *b*-speaking populations. In the current alternative being considered for NA, the *m-* variant would have had to have disappeared, since ancestral NA would only have had *b-V*, not *b-C* (i.e. *b-n*), *b-C* being a more recent analogical extension. In this scenario, the alternation *b- ~ m-* in NA would have to have arisen via parallel independent development. Parallel independent development, however, requires two (in this case) steps to derive the same forms, versus one common innovation in the development proposed in this chapter. Parallel independent development cannot be ruled out in principle, but it is a disfavoured alternative, other things being equal, and in this case, indeed, always, would need to be argued for against the unmarked assumption of common inheritance. In the current case it is a disfavoured explanation, since the NA *m-n* variant is easily seen as continuing an inherited state.



A third and final perspective on this is that in the more detailed interpretation of the NA *b-C*, it is argued that its locus of usage is in the Bagirmi dialect, not, originally, NA as a whole (see §8.3.3.4). Bagirmi Arabic is, against Sudanic Arabic in general (Owens 1993b) something of a *Sprachinsel* in that it contains very prominent dialectal features, i.e., features which often are used to represent major pan-Arabic isoglossic differences (see n. 28). Interpreting *b-C* as originally a Bagirmi feature in NA, out of which it then spread to the western NA dialects, allows the claim to be made that *b-C* was in the NA context originally another exemplar of the *Sprachinsel*-like status of Bagirmi Arabic, i.e., if in this variety a number of very striking phonological and morphological features were maintained with the original migration into the Bagirmi region, *b-C* as a marker of propositional adjacency was simply another of these retentions.

#### 8.4.4.2 Where is CLA?

A second critical point is that no mention has been made of CLA in the development of *b-*. Many scholars either assume that CLA represents a proto-variety from which the modern dialects derive historically (e.g. Yoda 2005) or simply that CLA is an adequate stand-in for Arabic as a whole (Hasselbach 2013: 43). From this perspective one would expect that such a widespread and old feature would have a reflex in CLA. However, in the spirit of Owens 2009, 2013c, the analysis of \*b- is based on the logic of the comparative method, not on *a priori* assumptions about which variety represents proto-Arabic. The comparative method reconstructs backwards, from attested cases. No single variety is automatically privileged in such reconstruction, even one described in detail in the eighth century. So far as I know, \*b- as described here simply is not attested in any Classical (OA in the sense of Owens 2009: 4) sources. The oldest written attestation appears to be, as Retsö notes (2014b), in Christian Palestinian manuscripts from the tenth century (Blau 1966–7: 149), where one certain and one possible token is attested. This is after the era CLA is based on. Of course, looking at the wider history of Arabic it is interesting to observe that such a widespread, and historically old (as will be shown) morpheme doesn't appear at one place or another in Classical sources, even if comparable cases of silence clearly exist (see Owens 2013a). By the same token, however, a surprising amount of material which today is thought of as pure dialect (e.g. the \*č reflex of \*k) was described by Sibawaih, the eighth century Arabic grammarian par excellence, responsible for defining CLA as we know it today (Owens 2013b), so absence from OA sources is not necessarily a trivial matter.

What can be observed in this regard are two points. First, effectively most of what we know about variation in the original OA of the immediate post-Islamic era does come from Sibawaih (in his *Kitāb*). Sibawaih, however, so far as we know, never left Basra in southern Iraq. While he described variants from across the Arabian Peninsula, he knew these from common knowledge and, presumably, his work with individuals from these areas. He was not a systematic dialectologist. If he never ran across a *b-* speaker, it would not be a surprise, and even if he had, he would have had to have integrated the variant into his inimitable grammatical thinking. If the form

didn't make sense to him, he probably could well have ignored it (Owens 2013b: 198). Secondly, it makes sense to assume that the original locus of the *b*- *p*-stem is where it is found today, the Gulf region and Najd. I have tentatively suggested (2013b: 192) that precisely this area was inhabited by speakers whose Arabic Sibawaih looked askance at (see also Holes' chapter, this volume). The *b*- form would, therefore, had it been observed by Sibawaih at all, started out with a social disadvantage in the first place.

#### 8.4.4.3 Reconstruction can be applied only to languages

A third objection to the current analysis might be that it is illegitimate to apply the historical comparative method to a single 'language'. This objection can be dismissed out of hand. It first of all begs the question what a language is (see Retsö 2013 for elaboration of this point relative to Arabic). Would Maltese be allowed in reconstruction just because it is officially a separate language, even if from a historical linguistic perspective it is essentially Arabic (Owens 2010)? I have argued that Uzbekistan Arabic, an important variety in this chapter, is a mixed language (Owens 2001). However, in the morphosyntactic traits crucial here it is quintessentially Arabic. Ultimately, the only criterion that can be used for what material is allowed in reconstruction is what varieties give interesting results. Speech communities are the basis of linguistic varieties (see §8.5) and to the extent that these are linguistically discrete, their varieties are to be integrated in the historical interpretation of the language.

Moreover, as will be seen in §8.5 (and in the Appendix), when one correlates the linguistic changes described here with a chronological time frame, what emerges is a model of \**b*- expansion very much compatible with Dixon's (1997) punctuated equilibrium, a set of changes associated with the pre- and early Islamic era which began spreading towards their current dialectal locations and which appear to have largely stabilized within each of the dialect units used as the basis of the current study. While Dixon developed his model on the basis of different languages, it is equally relevant to the inner-dialectal differentiation of a single language.

#### 8.4.4.4 The meaning shift postulated was so great, two origins of \**b*- are needed

A final objection can be raised by those who have argued (Kampffmeyer 1900; Retsö 2014a, b; see §8.3.1.3) that contemporary *b*- has such divergent meanings that two origins are needed. Whereas in the current chapter it is argued that a common origin is accompanied by a radical reinterpretation of *b*- among some populations, the dual-origin theory entails locating the difference in two originally independent developments.

This is not the place to offer an exhaustive critique of this position, since the argument for the dual origin itself is from a historical linguistic perspective at this point rudimentary. It observes contemporary distributions, forms, and functions of *b*-, observes that they can differ considerably, and concludes that such differences must be due to independent development. To this point, however, no one who has

advocated this position has gone beyond this observation. A detailed account has not yet developed for how internal differentiation within either of the two alleged origins developed further, nor have there been any attempts to explain crucial facts about the \*b- form. Briefly, problems of four sorts can be mentioned, which are as much indications for where advocates of this position would need to be more specific in their linguistic argumentation as they are criticisms of this approach.

First, there are technical questions regarding the origin of \*b- as a preposition. Arabic has two 'at' prepositions, *fi* and *bi*. Roughly, *bi* is eastern, *fi* western, including Egypt. Since Egyptian and Sudanic Arabic have *fi*, one presumably would need to see the innovation occurring in the Levant (which has *bi* 'at'), then the p-stem verb with that innovation moving to Egypt and Africa. This is possible, though obviously it needs to be supported by independent argumentation. There needs to be closer consideration given to the meaning of the *b-* p-stem in its prepositional origin. While it is certainly correct, as Retsö (2014a) observes, that there is a typologically close relationship between locatives and p-stems (cf. 'he is a-running < he is at running'),<sup>39</sup> such p-stems mark an immediately occurring action. The *b-* p-stem from stage 4 on, which is the most widespread value among contemporary dialects, is far more general than an immediate present. Indeed, in Damascene, an action which is immediately happening is marked unambiguously by *ʿam-* (see §8.3.2 and n. 17). The dual-origin approach would need to cover the explanation of both the linguistic and the geographic expansion to the contemporary situation in greater detail.

Secondly, there is the vexed question of independent parallel development. The current account offers a relatively straightforward explanation, for instance, as to how the odd NA and Uzbekistan p-stem \*b- paradigms came into existence in a common ancestral step. As the dual-origin approach now stands, prepositional *bi-* would have attached to all members of the paradigm. More problematically, it would need to argue that the *m-n-* allomorph of \*b- in the 1pl (§8.3.1.3) arose twice, once in G/N, once in the ancestor of the other dialects.

A third point is an answer to the possible objection that the dual-origin account avoids the need to create two meanings from an original unitary \*b-. There were always \*b<sub>1</sub>- and \*b<sub>2</sub>- from the beginning. A counter-observation in this regard is that there are a good number of instances of an original single morpheme in Arabic developing in the course of history different, even opposed values. *n-* in the p-stem paradigm, for instance, is both 1sng (e.g. North African dialects) and 1pl (most eastern dialects, CLA); *ʿam* itself, cited in this chapter (§8.3.2) is a marker of 'immediate present' (Damascus) and, in the Dakhla oasis in Egypt, roughly, (along with *ʿama*) has the function and distribution of stage 5 (Table 8.4) \*b-. In a case reminiscent of the current one, *ʿa-* is a marker of 'future' in Şanʿāni Arabic, prefixed to the p-stem, while in Upper Egypt between Minya and Asyut *ʿa-* p-stem has

<sup>39</sup> Or, nearer to home, consider Nubi (Creole Arabic), *uwo fi fi ġere* 'he is running' (right now), lit. 'he exists in running'. Spitta-Bey (1880: 203) suggests the form began in the 3msng perhaps as a kind of impersonal (the explanation is brief). He does not allude to phonological factors (see 4, 2), and makes no attempt to develop a comparative history that encompasses all varieties where it is attested.

approximately the value of stage 5 \*b- (present, habitual) (both observations, Manfred Woidich, p.c.). It is doubtful, I think, that one would automatically propose dual origins for the morphemes marking each of these functionally contrastive values without first thinking through the historical linguistic consequences. Indeed, for some of these, developmental trajectories have been elaborated which assume a common source (e.g. Owens 2003).

Fourthly, the dual-origin approach would need to address the fundamental question of why prefixes so formally similar should have two origins in a single language whose ancestral populations are known to have migrated from a general dispersal point in the Middle East, to have been in contact at many points in history, going back to pre-Islamic times, and why specifically this morpheme should have a dual origin among populations which otherwise share strikingly odd linguistic features. For instance, G/N and NA share many basic traits (e.g. retention of fpl paradigm), but also some highly uncommon, i.e. unusual ones, for instance the intrusive *-n(n)-* in suffixed active participles (Holes 2011a, Owens 2013a) or the adnominal linker *-in* marking the N + modifier construction (Holes 2011a). Why, it can be rhetorically asked, would NA take the *b-* p-stem from the ‘prepositional’ historical source, while it obviously shares specific features with the very dialect which has the opposed ‘want’ historical *b-* p-stem source? The current account is not faced with this dilemma. Ancestral NA and ancestral G/N shared a common ancestor with all of these traits, including the ‘want’ \*b- as argued for in (12), and ancestral NA-innovated \*b-, as described in detail in this chapter, while the other traits were maintained roughly in their original form and function until today.

## 8.5 SPEECH COMMUNITIES AND DIALECTAL APPARENT PAST

The analysis thus far has been based on formal reconstruction based on dialects. As far as the analysis has gone, it has little connection to Janda’s call to integrate sociolinguistic variation theory into historical interpretation and grammaticalization theory. In this regard, while one cannot literally go back into a variationist past for which no written documentation exists, one can, it may be suggested, use dialects as a concrete metaphor for reconstructing how linguistic variation in speech communities led eventually to change. To do this I draw an analogy between the sociolinguist’s concept of apparent time and what I will term ‘dialectal apparent past’. The idea of apparent time is an important instrument in the sociolinguistic study of language change (Labov 1972: 160ff., Tagliamonte and D’Arcy 2007). It compares speakers of different ages for a given linguistic trait. Typically a trait will increase or decrease with generations, and the direction of change will be interpreted as a change in progress. In Figure 8.1, trait T is increasing in the younger generations, so it might be inferred that T will eventually become widespread throughout the community as G3 ages. Note that this change is inferred, since there is no certainty that in fact the younger speakers will continue to maintain it.

$G_1 = 60$	$T_1$
$G_2 = 40$	$T_{11}$
$G_3 = 20$	$T_{111}$

FIGURE 8.1 Sociolinguistic apparent time

The dialectal apparent past (time) works conceptually in an analogous way, though its results need to be distinguished from sociolinguistic apparent time. Dialectal apparent time (Figure 8.2) looks at the reflexes of a linguistic trait assumed to have a common origin in all dialects.

$D_1$	$T$
$D_2$	$T_a$
$D_3$	$T_b$
$D_4$	$T_c$

FIGURE 8.2 Dialectal apparent time

Dialectal apparent time studies, like sociolinguistic apparent time studies, are conducted synchronically, but are projected backwards so that each dialect, or key aspects thereof, is interpreted as potentially representing an earlier historical state. These states can be inferentially arranged as representing the reconstructed stages of development of that trait, using basic concepts of comparative historical linguistics, in particular the identification of innovations. Labov (2007) has used dialectal apparent past to interpret the spread and change of American vowel systems originating from the East Coast. Communities historically tied to migrations from New York City, including Albany, Cincinnati, and New Orleans, have maintained a basic NYC-like structure, but have incrementally lost constraints which define a complex system of vowel variation. Against these, NYC, Philadelphia and other Mid-Atlantic cities, or at least significant social groups in them, maintain the constraints consistently. Labov concludes (2007: 371), 'It is apparent that an unbroken sequence of parent-to-child transmission is required to maintain complex patterns of phonetic, grammatical, and lexical specification like the NYC short-*a* pattern'. Note that Labov does not observe the effects of diffusion as it actually happened in Cincinnati in 1820, 1850, 1890. He infers it from the comparison of synchronic states.

The advantage of viewing individual dialects potentially as frozen pieces of language history is that the language is automatically embedded in a speech community. Reconstruction, the basis of historical linguistics, occurs in individual communities, and once a change occurs, it can be maintained by the community so long as the community is intact.

Returning to the history of *b-*, the five dialects are not only five dialects. They are also five stages of language history, or at least, pieces of history as extracted

in this chapter. Each piece is associated with a population. Populations are not linguistically homogeneous. Populations can split. Within a split population segment, forms which perhaps were not originally dominant can become so. What are seen today as innovations defining an entire group would originally have co-existed with the non-innovating forms. The original form continues to be used in the non-innovating residual group. This is essentially how the development of *\*b* can be understood. Leaving aside Şan‘āni, since the precise status and interpretation of *b*- is ambiguous (see §8.3.4),<sup>40</sup> the populations supporting the contemporary reflexes of *\*b*- can be represented as in Figure 8.3.

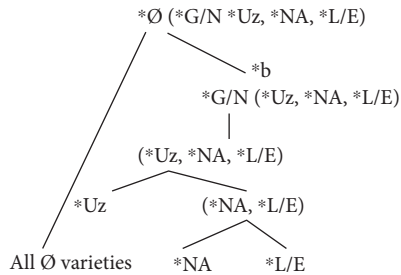


FIGURE 8.3 The split of *\*b*- populations

The asterisk attached to each dialectal group represents the fact that one is dealing with reconstructed ancestral demographic groups which support the linguistic reconstructions that are associated with them. Brackets indicate a collective defined against an innovation whose effect is visible today.

The representation begins with the reminder that *\*b*- did not innovate in all ancestral communities. Non-*\*b*-innovating varieties are attested in CLA itself, and in many contemporary dialects (see §8.3).

The group in which the original innovation took place, *\*yiba* > *\*b*- needs to have been ancestral to all subsequent *b*-bearing groups. The first split left the original *\*b* intact with ancestral *\*G/N*, while ancestral Uzbekistan, Nigerian, and Levantine/Egyptian, at this point undifferentiated linguistically, hence, effectively, simply the group that split from *\*G/N*, began developing stage 2 forms (see Table 8.4). The next split, the next migration, differentiated Uzbekistan from ancestral *\*NA* and *\*L/E*, at this point still undifferentiated, while the last split differentiated ancestral *\*NA* from *\*L/E*.

Each of these demographic splits was associated with a differentiating dialectal feature or features. As in all historical linguistic reconstructions, the splits are post hoc inferences. Since the splits are based on observations of contemporary dialectal boundaries, the impression needs to be avoided that the changes defining splits were abrupt. Only the end product is visible. The original shift, *G/N* versus other varieties, could well have involved groups which had the one trait or the other variably, with

<sup>40</sup> Besides the practical, unnaturally constrained limits of trying to represent complex diachronic-geographical data in two-dimensional space.

the situation observed today arrived at only over generations within each group. Indeed, in the current case one can cite dialects in the G/N region, the Shawawi dialect in Oman for instance (Eades 2008: 91), which ‘continue’ (in the current perspective) to form a future only with the full verb *yabğa*. If in general in the region (12) occurred, in some communities, even if the innovation had been introduced, it did not become established. One reading of the Shawawi form, therefore, is the maintenance of the original semantic extension of ‘want’ to a ‘future’ function. Whereas the Shawawi ‘retention’ interprets resolved variation against the larger dialectal area, in the case of NA, Bagirmi Arabic in particular (§8.3.3.3), the variation in the *b*-C context never ‘resolved’ itself into a categorical grammatical category. The variation in this case is interpreted to have been maintained over one thousand years.

The changes associated with each group have been described in §8.3, though not all aspects of these changes have been integrated into the generalizing schemas in Table 8.4 and Figure 8.3. For the sake of brevity, Figure 8.3 abstracts away from the linguistic details associated with each stage. In the Appendix a more adequate, though still not complete, representation of the linguistic changes associated with \*b- as it worked its way through reconstructed time is given, along with a brief commentary.

It is important to bear in mind that the terms ‘NA’, ‘L/E’, and so on are merely mnemonic, teleological labels. They happen to be what we observe and where we observe them today. Ancestral NA, however, and all ancestral groups, barring perhaps \*G/N, had at one time to be at a different place from where they are today, in Chad, in the Sudan, in Upper Egypt, back, probably, to the Gulf region. These migrations are documented independently in historical records to a greater or lesser degree (see discussion in Saleh 1978; Owens 1993a, b, 2003; Holes 2011a).

This perspective is important. To say that contemporary NA or contemporary Bagirmi Arabic, in particular, maintained a trait that has close parallels in Uzbekistan Arabic simply implies that the original innovation which defined the split was maintained through the ancestral history of both groups. It also implies that the dialect geography of the past was rather different from that of today. Egyptian Arabic must at one time have had the NA-type \*b, probably alongside other variants since ancestral NA moved through Egypt.

As a prelude to the next section, it is relevant to note that dialectal apparent time does not allow the hypothesis that a given linguistic trait will eventually become dominant throughout the language in the way that this inference is possible in sociolinguistic apparent time. This is because there is no mechanism guaranteeing the spread of features from one community to another in the way in which, by definition, younger members of a community will grow into older members. On the contrary, the existence of discrete features which define the dialects themselves attests to each having developed within a different community of speakers. Other things being equal,<sup>41</sup> to the extent that each of the five dialects examined in this chapter

<sup>41</sup> One cannot in this day and age discount the effect of dialect contact in inducing change. Gulf/Najdi dialects, in particular, are today exposed to massive migration in the form of Arabic-speaking workers from, inter alia, the Levant and Egypt, and many Arabic dialects are exposed to one another via television and Internet. How this new contact plays out is in need of sociolinguistic attention. On the other hand, NA



changes, the changes will be internal to each speech community. By the same token, the implied speech community discreteness of the ancestral populations underlines the differences observed in each dialect: each ancestral dialect went its own way, to one degree or another, in the past.

In Figures 8.1 and 8.2, the difference between sociolinguistic apparent time and dialectological apparent time is shown by the boxed-in spaces. In Figure 8.2, each boxed-in space represents a speech community, within which forms can be freely exchanged. Each dialect is isolated from the others, and hence it is assumed that changes in one dialect would not presage changes in another.

## 8.6 GRAMMATICALIZATION

In this context it is interesting to look at the role of grammaticalization in understanding the development of *\*b-*. While the data do not demand a treatment in terms of grammaticalization, grammaticalization processes have been implicitly adduced in a number of places, and ostensibly the data described here look tailor-made to fit into a grammaticalization framework. More importantly in this context, if grammaticalization exists as an independent structural force of some kind, one might expect to see it repeated in the different dialectal speech communities examined here, or alternatively, one might expect predictions to be made against universal grammaticalization trajectories which tell where *\*b-* is headed to in a given dialect.

Many instances of grammaticalization as described in the literature can be found in the current data. Properties of grammaticalization which can be discerned in the current data include phonological shortening, morphologization, and limitation of a morpheme to a fixed position (Verhoeven 2008: 2, see (12)), and an increase in obligatoriness (Heine and Reh 1982: 11, cf. in Table 8.4, stage 3 versus stage 5).<sup>42</sup> The shift from a verb 'want' to future/irrealis/volative marker is well described (Bybee et al. 1991). If (12) represents primary grammaticalization, the developments which come thereafter exemplify secondary grammaticalization (Van der Auwera 2002: 24, Kranich 2010).

The interest here, however, is not to associate specific individual phenomena in the current data with comparable cases or generalizations over a number of cases in other languages. Rather, generalizing across all of the individual speech communities discussed here, it can be asked to what extent grammaticalization theory steps in with a degree of predictability about which changes have occurred and why.

The entry point, the postulated *\*yiba* 'want' > *\*b-* 'future, irrealis, non-evidential' starts well enough. Individual lexemes do become grammaticalized in ways that reflect their lexical origins. However, even here, in the Arabic context, one wants to

or Uzbekistan are largely exempt from these influences, and as far as NA goes it is worth remarking that there is no indication of any shift towards a more L/E-type *b-* usage, for instance, use of Ø in syntactically defined contexts, for instance after modal and aspectual verbs (epistemic contexts). Moreover, the statistics in Table 8.1 indicate that even in contemporary Gulf countries there is no obvious trend towards a more grammaticalized *b-*.

<sup>42</sup> By way of orientation, in Bybee et al.'s fusion, dependence, and shortness indices (1991: 34–9), *b-* is placed well towards the more grammaticalized end of the scale in each (respectively, '4', '5', and either '7' or '8').



know why this happened in some varieties, but not in others. While the unavailability of *yiba* in many dialects might explain some of the difference, many varieties have reflexes of \**yiba* but no *b-*, seen in point 'c' in the parametricized summaries in (52). The change happened at some point, and once it stopped happening, either *yiba* and *b-* continued to co-exist, or reflexes of *yiba* alone continued without developing into *b-*, while those varieties in which *b-* developed continued with them, regardless of whether reflexes of *yiba* continued to exist in them or not.

Once the new morpheme is in the language the phase of secondary grammaticalization begins. Bybee et al. (1991) have a specific set of predictions for how reflexes of 'want', *yiba*, should develop: first a modal force 'desire, obligation', then 'intention, immediate future', then future, and finally 'probability, possibility'. In Persson's (2008) exposition, *b-* in G/N arguably reaches at least the third stage. However, in its further development outside G/N it makes a complete about-face. \**b-* shows a dramatic shift in L/E, for instance, becoming a marker of indicativeness, of here-and-now evidentiality. The modal values in L/E, by contrast, are assumed by the Ø p-stem.

Once the shift occurred, the fate of \**b-* within the five relevant dialectal communities varied. In Šan'āni, *b-* versus Ø develops a well-profiled contrast only in part. In NA, in the *b-V* context and in L/E generally, and probably in Uzbekistan Arabic as well, *b-* versus Ø has a broad indicative versus subjunctive contrast, i.e. it has become essentially a 'symmetric' modal contrast. However, in NA only deontic modality is marked by Ø, whereas in L/E Ø marks both deontic and epistemic modality.

Apart, therefore, from providing an insight into the primary grammaticalization of \**yiba* > \**b-*, grammaticalization theory generally fails to elucidate the global developments of Arabic \**b-*. Most importantly, it provides no link as to how the original non-evidential *b-* of G/N changed dramatically to the evidential indicativeness of the other varieties. Indeed, taken at face value, Bybee et al.'s (1991) scale might be interpreted as saying that such a shift should not occur. It is for this reason that a great deal of detail was expended describing the NA *b-C* context in §8.3.3.2. What is argued is that the shift to indicativeness followed from the happy conjunction of two factors. *b-* shifted from being a marker relating a proposition to the external world to one marking a relation between adjacent, discourse-immanent propositions. This then generalized into the unmarked value of indicative. The regularization of this shift was facilitated by the phonological 'gap' which existed in V-initial p-stem verbs (§8.4.2), so that the regularization of *b-* had a phonological as well as a pragmatic motivation.

However, if grammaticalization theory does not elucidate beyond the primary grammaticalization stage in the data presented here,<sup>43</sup> it still can be seen to have two important functions. First, grammaticalization provides a convenient and graphic metaphor allowing the parametricized values to be aligned in a fashion which encompasses all varieties where \**b-*-reflexes occur. This is represented in the different

<sup>43</sup> The findings here complement Poplack (2011) who shows that the grammaticalization of 'go' futures in three related Romance languages, Portuguese, French, and Spanish, is sensitive to quite different conditioning factors in each. A recent special edition of *Language Sciences* devoted to secondary grammaticalization (Breban and Kranich 2015) fails to find a unified definition of the phenomenon, and some contributors (Bisang 2015) even question its relevance.

stages in Table 8.4. While the scale is termed a grammaticalization scale, it is necessarily epiphenomenal. Apart from the issue of whether grammaticalization itself is epiphenomenal, it is epiphenomenal because it fictionalizes ‘Arabic’ into a single language community, which it isn’t. The scale is the analyst’s post hoc assessment of developments, which has no predictive value, if only because the variants are ensconced in individual speech communities. Aside from the possibility of dialect contact, alluded to in n. 41, it is difficult to see what language-internal forces should push stage 1 G/N *b-* to stage 5 *b-*, for instance.

Still, calling the developments summarized in Table 8.4 ‘grammaticalization’ allows a complex linguistic history that stretches back at least over 1,300 years and over a large part of the earth’s surface to be concisely compressed into one table. It allows one to talk about what are in some sense related phenomena within a context of ongoing variation, change, and stability.

The second function of grammaticalization is as a metafilter. The reconstruction developed here begins with \*yiba ‘want’ > \*b- ‘non-evidential’, a change argued to be still in place in G/N. Logically, it could be argued—and indeed, as seen briefly in §8.3.1.2, it has been in different forms—that the original change was \*yiba (or some other lexeme) > \*b- ‘indicative’ (rather than > non-evidential). Here, however, Bybee et al.’s study of the trajectory of ‘want futures’ provides corroborating evidence for the argumentation followed in this chapter.

## 8.7 CONCLUSION

The current study is based on a historical linguistic analysis built of various analytical and methodological instruments most of which are familiar linguistic ideas, including grammaticalization, analogy, and splits defined by innovations. One, the role of discourse pragmatics in determining the reinterpretation of a bound morpheme, is perhaps not so widespread in the literature, though the argument proceeds from a close corpus-based analysis. What the concentration on one morpheme over a long diachronic and dialectal expanse brings out is, in Gensler’s words, the ‘diachronic mutability of grammatical categories’ (2002: 712). The more one follows the history of a single morpheme—Gensler traced the evolution of the contemporary preposition *yn* ‘in’ out of the proto-Brythonic (British Celtic) article \**ind* - the more one discovers odd twists and turns, reinterpretations and attractions, which do not reduce to a simple typological development or grammaticalization trajectory. In the present case an original \*yiba > \*b- serves as the source of two values which have essentially split into opposites, ‘future, volitional, non-evidential’ versus ‘indicative, evidential’.

The basis of the reconstruction resides in individual dialects, and it is argued that these can be thought of as speech communities which represent on a comparative basis the apparent past. This is one operationalization of Janda’s call to integrate variational linguistics into historical linguistic thinking. The rationale of this step is threefold.

First, in giving explicit recognition to variation, it allows contemporarily attested variation to serve as an analogical model for what might have happened in the

reconstructed stages of change. The key element in the current chapter hinges on the NA/Bagirmi *b-* as a propositional adjacency marker (§8.3.2, §8.3.3) where the pragmatically determined variation provides the interpretive basis of stages 2 and 3 in Figure 8.3. Potentially, however, it is not restricted to this. It was suggested, for instance, that variationist study of Ṣanʿāni *b-* would throw light on the historical status of *b-* in that variety, and by implication on the overall development of *\*b-* in Arabic.

Secondly, the step affirms that linguistic forms are, and always have been, properties of speech communities. This, I think, makes more palatable the argument offered here that there is only one history of *\*b-*, taken in different directions by different speech communities. As seen in §8.4.4.2, there is a reluctance in Arabic historical studies in particular not only to give due recognition to the contemporary spoken language as opposed to the normatized Classical and Standard varieties, but also to trace the history of individual dialectal forms to a generalizing historical source. One asks not of the history of *\*b-*, but rather what the source of Levantine *b-* is, or Gulf/Najdi *b-*, as if the history of the language of native Arabic speakers is ineradicably tied to the political unit they happen to have been born and socialized in. Recognizing that *\*b-* spread or innovated not by philological fiat, but rather by encapsulation in living speech communities, reattaches language to societies with their own individual histories.

This point is important enough in Arabic historical linguistics to warrant reiteration. Invoking speech communities has no meaning unless they can be given concrete, internal contours. The tendency in Arabic historical linguistics is to base analyses on fixed grammars. This is unobjectionable so long as the relevant features are invariable, or relatively so. *b-* in L/E, for instance, was suggested (§8.3.2) to have values which are largely expressible by grammatical rule or characterization. NA *b-V* is equally 'simple'. Not all parts of language are like this, however, and parts which today are so, may not always have been so. Gulf/Najdi *b-* and NA *b-C* are explicable only with a detailed corpus-based study yielding a fuzzy, pragmatically based characterization. It was also suggested that a better understanding of Ṣanʿāni *b-* requires such an approach. Thinking of language as embedded in speech communities creates a legitimacy for integrating such 'fuzzy' data into mainstream historical linguistic interpretation.

Thirdly, in general it allows one to think of the relation between transmission and change as a community property. Here, for instance, whereas Janda (2001) emphasizes the inherent discontinuity of language because it must be learned anew in each generation, the different values which *\*b-* has assumed in Arabic do in fact reduce to a relatively small number, when set against the over-1,000-year existence of the form across different speech communities. If there is an inherent potential for breaks in transmission, the forces of stability and equilibrium are also strong.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> One perspective in this regard is that of Nettle 1999. While his computer-based model is, as Nettle himself states, rudimentary (54), it does suggest that social differentiation expedites language change (1999: 58). By the same token, populations in which there are few barriers to language interaction tend to show variation, but not change.

One final point emerges from this study and that is that the linguistic history of Arabic is not simple. This chapter tells the story of one morpheme which occurs in many varieties of Arabic, but hardly in all. As seen in §§8.1 and 8.4.4.4, there is a series of structurally related p-stem verb prefixes awaiting their own treatment. The obverse history of *b-*, the Ø p-stem, which in a number of dialects has developed a subjunctive value, has remained in the background. \**b-* is the tip of the iceberg.

## APPENDIX

The flow chart in Figure 8.4 outlines the steps by which the putative evolutions of the different contemporary varieties are reconstructed. It fills out the linguistic detail behind Figure 8.3. The steps represent logical stages, in that a change defined at a higher level is the condition for a lower level. By the same token, given our chronological knowledge of the Arabo-Islamic expansion, it is possible to deduce a time *ad quem* a given innovation would have occurred, given what is known about when the populations reached their current habitats.

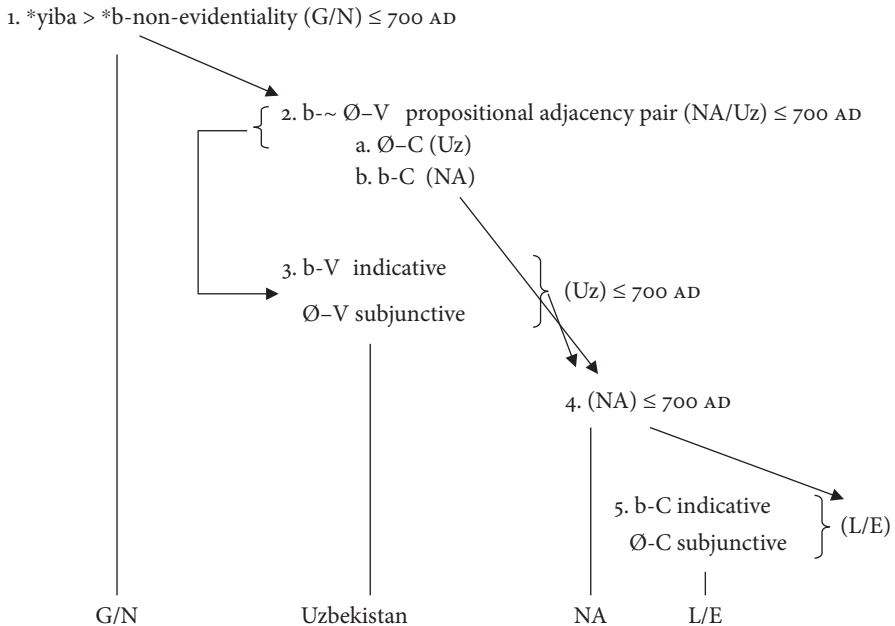


FIGURE 8.4 The development of \*b-: chronology

Notes to follow

**Figure 8.4** Notes

≤ development occurred not later than.

1. The postulated original primary grammaticization of \*yiba to \*b- with its 'non-evidentiality' meaning, as in contemporary G/N. This change is postulated to have taken place at the latest by 700 AD, and probably occurred before that time. This is the only change which occurred among some ancestral groups of speakers, hence its attestation in G/N today, i.e. this ancestral group underwent no further changes. I put in brackets the contemporary dialect which serves as the major basis of reconstruction. In this case, it is the Gulf/Najdi dialect. At this point the conditioned change \*b > \*m- before 1pl n- had occurred, since this alternation is attested in all subsequent groups.
2. Groups of speakers with (1) innovated b- to a propositional adjacency value. This was accompanied by the regularization of b- before any V-p-stem, creating a uniform p-stem paradigm beginning with a C-, where C = either \*b- or a person marker n-, t-. This change is also postulated as pre 700 AD, since the change 'explains' the basic asymmetry in the Uzbekistan and NA p-stem paradigm today, i.e. the two paradigms go back to a common innovation. The propositional adjacency value opened the way for a 'new' interpretation of \*b-, whose reflex is found in the next step.
3. One group regularized \*b-V a step further, creating a contrastive indicative (\*b-) versus subjunctive (Ø) out of the b ~ Ø alternation. One part of this group, ancestral Uzbekistan Arabic, also changed \*b- to \*m- throughout the paradigm. This change is relatively easy to pinpoint diachronically: it happened before 700 AD since the \*b- > \*m- change is characteristic of Uzbekistan Arabic only.
4. A sister group of 3 shared in the development of the indicative/subjunctive contrast, but also kept the optional occurrence of b-C in the 'propositional adjacency' sense. This is represented in step 4, where contemporary NA is the result of step 2b and 3. It did not share in the general \*b- > \*m- change of Uzbekistan Arabic. This change too can be postulated to have occurred before 700 AD.
5. A final change was effected by a group of speakers who regularized the \*b- = indicative versus \*Ø- = subjunctive contrast to all members of the paradigm, not only to those beginning with a V-inflected p-stem. The specific innovation marking this stage is that b- takes on a new 'indicative' meaning before -C- p-stems, against its inherited value where the indicative meaning of b- was present only before V-p-stems. This is ancestral L/E. No dating for this change is given for the moment, though it can be assumed to be post 700 but pre-1200.

# The Northern Fertile Crescent

STEPHAN PROCHÁZKA

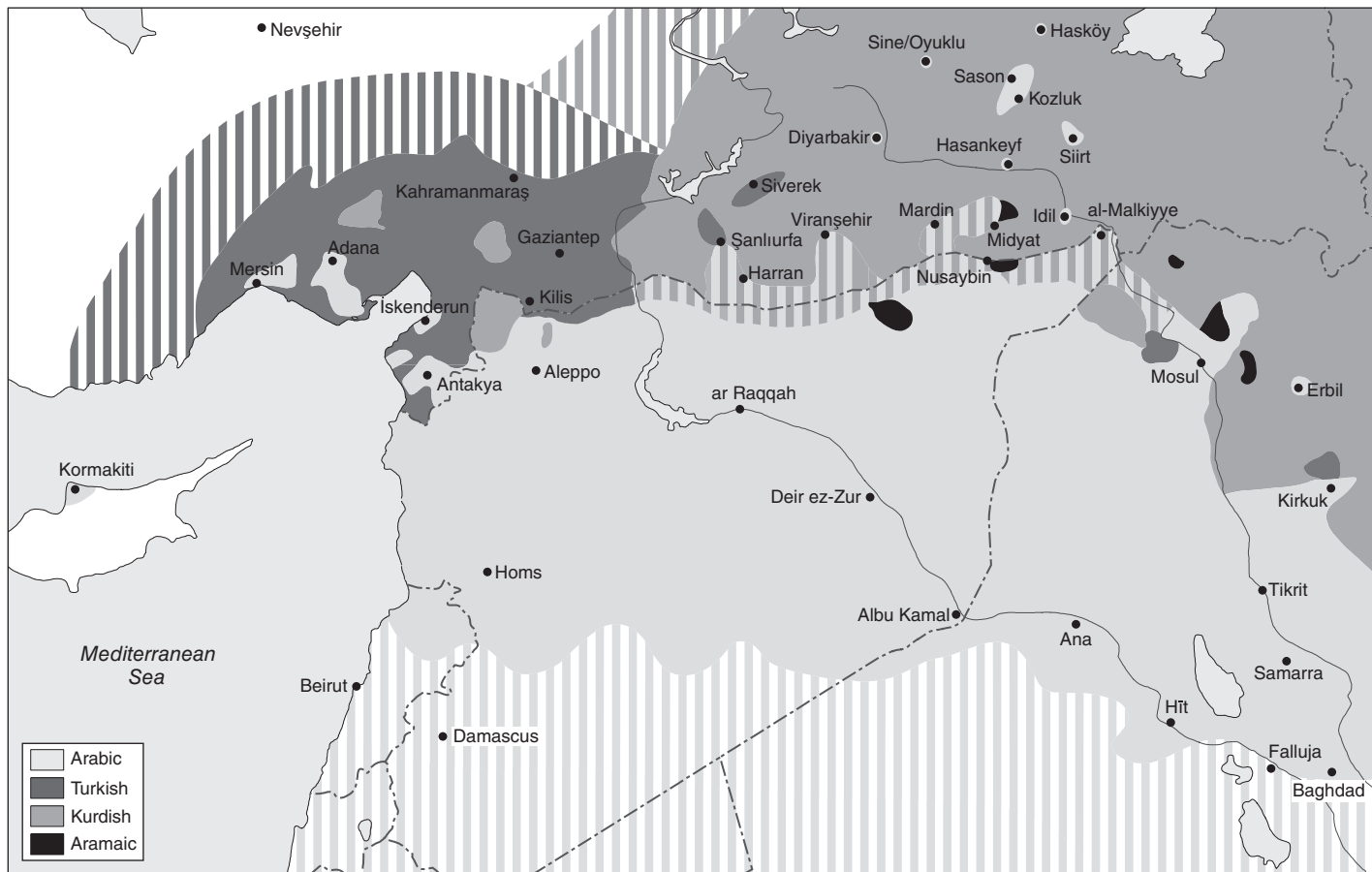
## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The present chapter covers the Arabic dialects spoken in the northern part of the Fertile Crescent, stretching from Cilicia in the west to Iraqi Kurdistan in the east. The southern limits of the region are from Baghdad up the Euphrates River and west through Aleppo to the Mediterranean. Today, the speakers of these dialects live in three different states: Turkey, Syria, and Iraq.

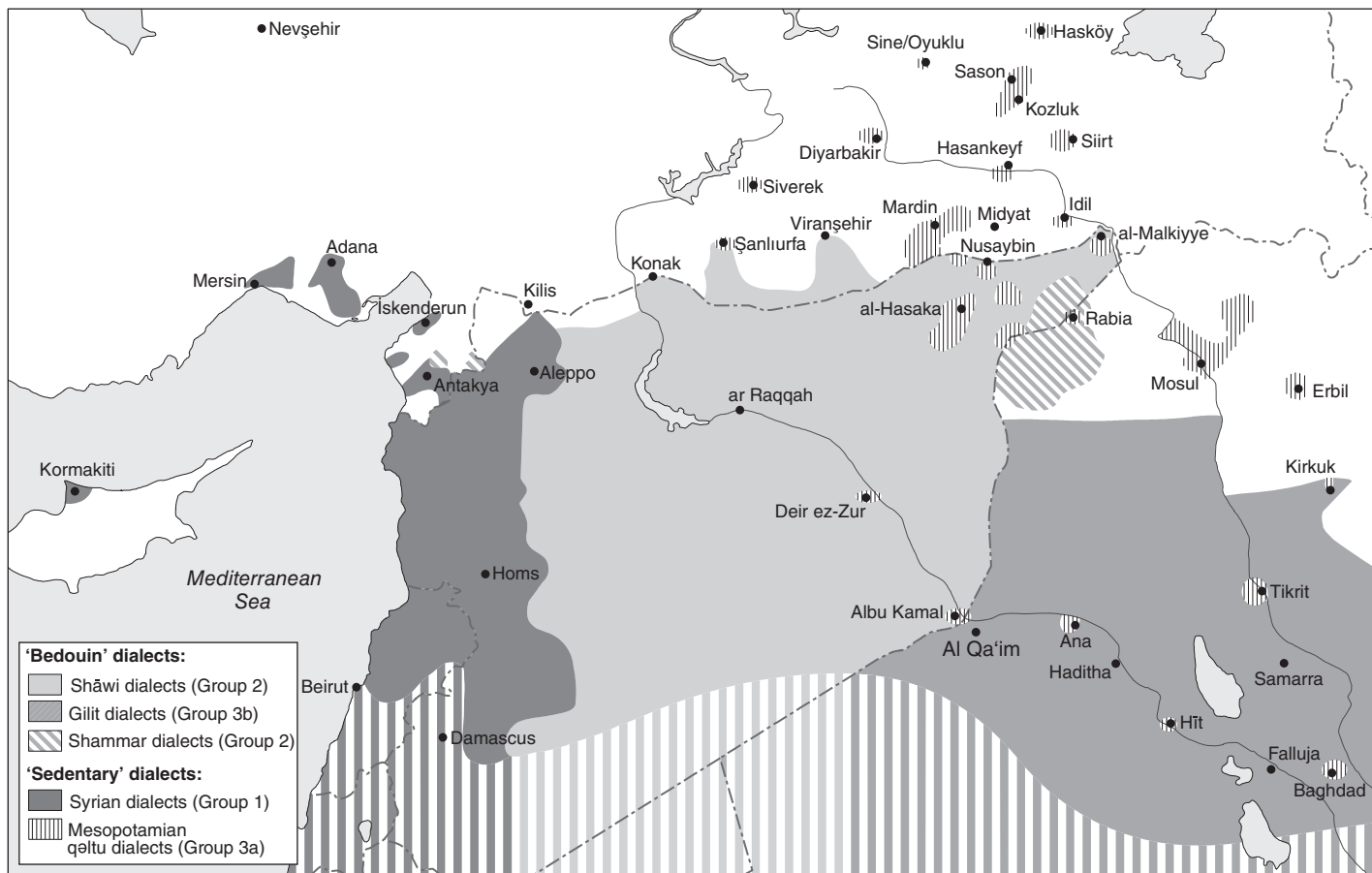
The area is characterized by linguistic diversity and religious pluralism; religions include Sunnī, ʿAlawī, and Shīʿī Islam, Christianity, Judaism (until c.1950), and smaller sects like the Yazidis. For millennia various Semitic and Indo-European languages have coexisted in the region, and during the last thousand years Altaic Turkish was part of this linguistic mix. At present, linguistic contact occurs mainly between Arabic, Turkish, and Kurdish; Aramaic plays a very marginal role. As Map 9.1 indicates, the northern part of the region is linguistically extremely heterogeneous. In the north Arabic is not spoken in contiguous areas, resulting in few contacts between the different Arabic dialects. Some Arabic dialects, particularly in Cilicia and parts of south-eastern Anatolia, are completely isolated and surrounded by Turkish- and/or Kurdish-speaking regions.

The linguistic diversity of the region is mirrored in the Arabic dialects (Map 9.2). These can be classified into three groups: (1) the Arabic spoken in Cilicia (Çukurova) and the Turkish province of Antioch (Hatay) constitutes a part of Syro-Palestinian Arabic (group 1); (2) dialects which belong to the North Arabian group prevail in the centre of the region and extend north up to the Turkish city of Urfa (group 2); (3) the dialects spoken in the south-eastern parts of Anatolia together with those of Iraq (group 3).<sup>1</sup> All dialects of group 1 are ‘sedentary’-type dialects, and all of group 2 ‘bedouin’-type dialects. Group 3 includes an older layer of ‘sedentary’-type dialects (group 3a) and a more recent layer of ‘bedouin’-type dialects (group 3b). According to

<sup>1</sup> For details see Palva 2006 (general classification), Behnstedt 2009 (Syria), Jastrow 2006a (Anatolia), and Jastrow 2007 (Iraq).



MAP 9.1 Languages spoken in the Northern Fertile Crescent today: Arabic, Turkish, Kurdish, Aramaic



MAP 9.2 'Bedouin' and 'sedentary' Arabic dialect areas in the Northern Fertile Crescent



the pronunciation of the word for ‘I said’, ‘sedentary’ and ‘bedouin’ dialects are usually labelled as *qeltu* and *gilit* dialects, respectively.

## 9.2 HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT

The complicated history of settlement in the region has not yet been investigated in detail and will probably remain unknown for several regions and eras. Historical sources often mention ethnic groups, but information on languages is scarce and seldom provides any hints on linguistic varieties. The present chapter is a tentative attempt to explain the historical processes behind the present linguistic map of the region: much must remain hypothetical concerning the history of Arabic dialects here, particularly regarding earlier periods.

The history of Arabic in most parts of this region starts not with the Muslim conquest in the seventh century, but at least three to four centuries earlier. The Syrian steppe, including the fertile lands on its edges, and large parts of the Jazīra<sup>2</sup> were mostly Arabic-speaking when the Muslim armies arrived. Many of the local Arab tribes had adopted Christianity and used Aramaic in written communication. It can be assumed that there was significant bilingualism or even trilingualism with Aramaic and Persian, particularly among the sedentary population in towns such as Anbār, Hit, Tikrīt, and al-Ḥīra (Morony 2005: 221ff., Toral-Niehoff 2014: 122–4). The most important Arab tribes already in the region before Islam were the Asad, Bakr ibn Wā’il, Iyād, al-Namir, Taghlib, Ṭayyī<sup>3</sup>, Tamīm, and Tanūkh.<sup>3</sup> Following the conquest, a steady influx of Arab tribes came from the Peninsula to Iraq (in smaller numbers to Syria; cf. Donner 1981: 250) especially to its south and the garrison cities of Basra and Kufa (Morony 2005: 236–50). The largest Arab town in the north became Mosul, which was dominated by various branches of the Azd, who originated in Oman. The city’s hinterland was mainly controlled by Taghlib and ‘Anaza (Orthmann 2002: 108; Robinson 2000: 73–7).

The details of the Arabization of Iraq are unknown but it is certain that Aramaic was only slowly replaced by Arabic, particularly in the countryside. In the north it has survived even to the present (Morony 2005: 177ff., Holes 2007b: 123). In towns, a smaller number of Persian speakers lived in Iraq for many centuries after the conquest (Orthmann 2002: 133; Robinson 2000: 72).

However, during the early Islamic and most subsequent periods, the Jazīra and the Syrian Steppe remained in the hands of pastoral groups. It was traditionally divided into three regions named after large tribal confederations: Diyār Muḍar west of the Khabur River (Tamīm, Qays), Diyār Rabī‘a between the Khabur and the Tigris (Taghlib, Bakr, al-Namir), and Diyār Bakr in northern Mesopotamia (Robinson 2000: 168, 61). The last region took its name from Bakr, of which the Shaybān

<sup>2</sup> The Arabic term for the northern part of Mesopotamia.

<sup>3</sup> For details and geographical distribution cf. Toral-Niehoff 2014: 127–31; Morony 2005: 214–35; *Elʿ* s.v. Asad, Bakr ibn Wā’il, Iyād, al-Namir b. Ḳāṣīt, Taghlib, Ṭayyī<sup>2</sup>, Tamīm ibn Murr, Tanūkh.

branch settled there in the mid-seventh century and thus probably formed one component of the Arabic-speaking groups in Anatolia. Other Arab tribes that came to Anatolia were the Qays (around Lake Van) and the partly Christian Tanūkh. Another branch of the latter settled in the mountains east of Lattakia in the ninth century (*EP*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. ‘Tanūkh’). Life in the larger cities such as Urfa, Diyarbakir, and Nusaybin seems not to have changed much and the population to have remained largely Christian and non-Arab (Robinson 1996: 443). During the first half of the tenth century most parts of the Northern Fertile Crescent came under the rule of a subtribe of the Taghlib, the Banū Ḥamdān, who were based mainly in Aleppo and Mosul. Towards the end of that century the region witnessed significant ethnic changes and the rise of non-Arab rulers. There was a wave of immigration of tribes from Arabia to the Jazīra and adjacent regions, among them the ‘Uqayl, Kilāb, and Numayr, who ousted the long-established Taghlib (Heidemann 2002: 32). At almost the same time Kurdish tribes took possession of south-eastern Anatolia and Iraq east of the Tigris, and in the eleventh century Turkoman tribes began to raid the region (Ripper 2000: 261–5). The northern and eastern boundaries of Arabic have remained largely unchanged since.

We suggest the late tenth century as the *terminus ante quem* for the development of the common linguistic traits described in §9.3. As has been said, the bulk of the rural and pastoral Arabic-speaking population consisted mainly of a few large tribes. Many of them settled in different territories, such as the Bakr, whom we find in both Iraq and Anatolia. The large cities, particularly Basra and Kufa, were inhabited by a very large number of tribes that fostered the development of regional *koinai*. Owing to the political and demographic importance of these cities (to which Baghdad was later added), their dialect(s) certainly spread into other parts of the region (Magidow 2013: 199–206). Thus it can be assumed that until the end of the tenth century relatively homogenous varieties of Arabic were spoken from the Gulf (perhaps as far as Bahrain and Oman) to Anatolia, and from the Zagros to the Mediterranean (and Cyprus). We argue that these varieties constitute the common core of the ‘sedentary’ dialects described in this chapter. After that time,<sup>4</sup> most Anatolian dialects, except those of the Mardin group, became isolated and under the influence of Kurdish and later Turkish.<sup>5</sup> After the Mongol conquest of Iraq in the thirteenth century, Mesopotamia and Syria remained politically divided, and this facilitated divergent linguistic developments, which may well have continued following the Ottoman conquest in the sixteenth century because the two regions were linguistically and politically separated by broad territories under bedouin control. In Iraq, the Mongols’ devastation resulted in extensive de-urbanization and tribal bedouin dominance. All *gilit*-type dialects (group 3b)

<sup>4</sup> Talay (2014: 179) claims that the split happened only in the sixteenth century, after the Ottoman conquest.

<sup>5</sup> Local tradition often provides a different picture (cf. Zimmermann 2009: 612 for Uzbekistan Arabic). The Arabs of Tillo near the Anatolian town of Siirt claim, for instance, that they came in two waves, the first from Syria in c.1300 and the second from Arabia in c.1600 (Lahdo 2010: 26). Linguistic evidence does not corroborate this; but because there are no other sources, it cannot be entirely dismissed.

are the result of this linguistic bedouinization, which began in the thirteenth century and affected the whole of the south and virtually all rural settlements further north. In and south of Baghdad, only non-Muslim communities speak *qəltu* dialects (group 3a); to the north, only the urban population (Holes 2007b: 130ff.). Along the Euphrates group 3a dialects have been preserved in only a few towns (Dēr iz-Zōr, Albu Kamāl, ʿĀna, Hīt).<sup>6</sup> The scattered enclaves of group 3a dialects in the Syrian Khabur region around al-Ḥasaka are not relics of an older stratum but the result of the exodus of mainly Christian Arabs from Anatolia during the persecutions of WWI. The Khawetna of NE Syria immigrated to that region from around Mosul only at the end of the nineteenth century (Talay 1999: 1).

The ‘bedouin’ dialects of the semi-nomadic sheep and goat herders (called Shāwi) in the Jazīra seem to constitute the older strata and in parts may go back to the eleventh century or even earlier (Oppenheim 1939: 226ff.). However, many tribes were always on the move and migration to and from the Jazīra happened frequently up to the twentieth century, which explains the high degree of homogeneity among the various ‘bedouin’ dialects. Only the camel-breeding Shammar and ʿAnaza, who migrated to the Jazīra from Central Arabia at the beginning of the nineteenth century, have significantly different dialects (Oppenheim 1939: 55, Behnstedt 2000: 424–58).

At about the same time parts of the Cilician Plain became Arabic-speaking as ʿAlawī peasants gradually moved there from NW Syria. They mainly settled along the rivers and on the outskirts of large towns such as Adana and Tarsus (Procházka-Eisl and Procházka 2010: 49–64). The delineation of political borders after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 had a significant influence on linguistic developments. In particular those speakers of Arabic who in 1923 became citizens of the Republic of Turkey largely lost contact with other Arabic speakers and also were influenced by Turkish nationalist politics.

## 9.3 LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION OF FEATURES RELEVANT TO HISTORICAL DIALECTOLOGY

### 9.3.1 INHERITED FEATURES

In this section some features are described which were most likely already present in the first layers of Arabic that were introduced to the region. Thus these features can be labelled as ‘archaic’ or ‘pre-diasporic’, i.e. going back to dialects spoken in Arabia before Islam.

<sup>6</sup> In the sixteenth century all these towns had fewer than five thousand inhabitants. An Ottoman census of that time mentioned not a single village in the whole of the Jazīra, which indicates that only very small permanent settlements were there (Göyünç/Hütteroth 1997: 128; 77).

### 9.3.1.1 Phonology

#### 9.3.1.1.1 Consonants

The interdental fricatives /d̪/, /t̪/, and /d̪/, have been preserved in all ‘bedouin’ dialects and in the majority of the ‘sedentary’ dialects east of the Euphrates.<sup>7</sup> Significant exceptions are only found in Anatolia (see §9.3.2.1.1).

A striking feature of practically all dialects of the region, including the urban dialect of Aleppo, is that /ǧ/ is pronounced as a voiced affricate [dʒ]. Compared to most adjacent dialects in Syria and the Gulf this can be regarded as an extraordinarily archaic trait. The same is true for /q/, which has been preserved in almost all ‘sedentary’ dialects.<sup>8</sup> In a couple of eastern Syrian ‘sedentary’ dialects ‘bedouin’ influence has resulted in the adoption of the sound /g/ instead of /q/ in many lexemes (Behnstedt 1997a: map 9; Talay 1999: 31).

#### 9.3.1.1.2 Vowels

A conspicuous trait of the ‘sedentary’ dialects—Syrian and Mesopotamian alike<sup>9</sup>—is the raising of word-internal *ā* to *ē* (or *ī*), which is conditioned by an *i/ī* in the same word. This phenomenon was described as early as the eighth century by the Arab grammarian Sibawaih, who called it *imāla*. Examples:

##### (1) *imāla*

Mardin: *ǧāmiʿ* > *ǧēmāʿ* ‘mosque’, *kilāb* > *klēb* ‘dogs’ (Grigore 2007: 80)

Aleppo: *yuhāsib* > *yhēseb* ‘he pays’; *ʿawāmid* > *ʿwēmīd* ‘poles’ (Sabuni 1980: 41–3)

Cilicia: *naǧǧār* > *niǧǧār*, pl *niǧǧērīn* ‘carpenters’ (Procházka 2002a: 46)

The existence of the sound shift in a word such as *klēb* shows that the *imāla* has to be older than the widespread elision of short /i/ and /u/. However, as *niǧǧār* shows, the *imāla* is not triggered by *i* which emerged from *\*a* in certain patterns (see §9.3.2.1.2), indicating that this shift happened after the rules of the *imāla* became established. Another indication of the great age of this feature is that it exists in a large number of dialects which have been out of contact with other varieties of Arabic for centuries.<sup>10</sup> Independent innovation is very unlikely because, generally speaking, many shared rules and exceptions are indicative of a common origin. Jonathan Owens attempted to reconstruct the history of the *imāla* by putting this feature into a wider context. He also included different types of *imāla* not conditioned by an /i/ in the same word and

<sup>7</sup> For the dialects further west see Lentin, this volume, §7.5.2.

<sup>8</sup> Aleppo exhibits the shift to ʔ characteristic of most towns in the Levant (see Lentin, this volume, §7.5.3). From there ʔ has spread to the west and is also attested for two villages in Hatay (Behnstedt 1997a: map 9; Arnold 1998: 34). The sound ʔ is also found as an allophone of *q* in the Siirt group of Anatolia, where it is regarded as a typical female feature (Jastrow 1978: 40ff.).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Cyprus: Borg 1985: 57–9; Syria: Behnstedt 1997a: map 33; Cilicia: Procházka 2002b: 93; Hatay: Arnold 1998: 65; Aleppo: Sabuni 1980: 37–44; Anatolia: Jastrow 1978: 65–9; Iraq: Jastrow 2007: 417.

<sup>10</sup> Its existence in Cypriot Arabic, which was cut off from other Arabic speakers in the thirteenth century, prompted A. Borg to state that the *imāla* is ‘a diagnostic trait showing unequivocally that Cypriot Arabic could hardly be an offshoot of Lebanese Arabic *tout court*.’ (Borg 2004: xx).

attested for Libya, Malta, and Andalusi Arabic (Owens 2006: 220–9).<sup>11</sup> What is important for our region is that, already by the eighth century, ‘*imāla*’ was a very widespread phenomenon with a plethora of conditioning factors’ (Owens 2006: 206). Thus it must be seen not as a post-diasporic innovation, but as an old inherited phonological feature. However, the fact that the specific form of the *imāla* described here exists in all ‘sedentary’ dialects of the Northern Fertile Crescent may to some extent be explained by the wave model (François 2014: 168–70). According to the sources, after the conquest the feature was common in southern Iraq (Levin 2007: 311). When Baghdad was founded in 762, many of its inhabitants originated from southern Iraq, a large proportion of whom probably spoke dialects with *imāla*.<sup>12</sup> Thus we can assume that the *imāla* was a high-prestige linguistic feature and it is likely that it spread along the trade routes, in particular up the Tigris and Euphrates to Aleppo and Anatolia. If we assume that the *imāla* spread north and west from southern and central Iraq in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, this would explain its absence in the dialects of Central Asia, because their speakers probably left Mesopotamia in the first half of the eighth century (Magidow 2013: 261).

### 9.3.1.1.3 *Diphthongs*

The two diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ have mainly been preserved in the ‘sedentary’ dialects throughout the region. This again can be seen as an archaic trait, because monophthongization is an extremely widespread phenomenon in Arabic dialects (Iványi 2006: 642). But in the Northern Fertile Crescent, monophthongization is restricted to large cities (Baghdad, Mosul, Aleppo (Blanc 1964: 50ff.; Sabuni 1980: 59)) and a few dialects showing strong ‘bedouin’ influence, e.g. Dêr iz-Zôr (Jastrow 1978: 78). As for Aleppo, the diphthongs have been preserved, but only in the dialect of its Christians. The Christian community of Aleppo belongs to the oldest layer of the city’s population and lives in separate town quarters; this may have fostered the preservation of conservative features.

## 9.3.1.2 *Morphology*

### 9.3.1.2.1 *Pronouns*

Because the closed-list class of pronouns has been subject to many innovations, it is treated in §9.3.2.2.1. Here only two conservative traits will be briefly discussed, the first characteristic of ‘bedouin’-type and the second in group 3a dialects.

In all ‘bedouin’-type dialects of the region gender distinction has been kept as a distinctive category in the plural of personal pronouns (Table 9.1).<sup>13</sup> The *m* forms

<sup>11</sup> To Owens’ data one could add the existence of *imāla* in some Negev ‘bedouin’ dialects (Shawarbah 2012: 81–9) and in some ‘sedentary’ dialects (e.g. Muḏaibi, Sinaw) of the interior of northern Oman (Clive Holes, p.c.).

<sup>12</sup> The Arabic-speaking Muslim population may have been mostly from Kufa. There are speculations that the Christians and Jews came from the pre-Islamic Arab town al-Ḥira (Magidow 2013: 206).

<sup>13</sup> The preservation of gender distinctions in pronouns is always paralleled in the corresponding demonstrative pronouns and verbal inflections—i.e. gender distinction in the plural exists in all or none of these three categories.

usually contain *u* and *m*, the *f* forms *i* and *n*, but there are dialects exhibiting the vowel *a* in both forms. The *f i*-forms are probably older than the CLA forms showing *u* in both genders.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 9.1 2/3pl pronoun forms, Shāwī bedouin (Behnstedt 2000: 454)**

	mpl	fpl
2	<i>intum</i> <i>intam</i> <i>intam</i>	<i>intin</i> <i>intin</i> <i>intan</i>
3	<i>huṁṁma</i>	<i>hinna</i>

The other archaic feature is connected to the pronominal suffix of 2fsng, which in OA was invariably *-ki*. In both the Iraqi<sup>15</sup> and Anatolian ‘sedentary’ dialects *-ki* has been maintained in all phonological contexts, whereas in other ‘sedentary’ dialects of this region (e.g. that of Cilicia) this form is found only after a vowel (otherwise *-ik*) (Table 9.2).<sup>16</sup>

**Table 9.2 2fsng pronominal suffix (Jastrow 1979: 43; Grigore 2007: 230ff.; Procházka 2002a: 65–7)**

	after C- ‘house’	after V- ‘brother’
Mosul	<i>bēt-ki</i>	<i>axū-ki</i>
Mardin	<i>bayt-ki</i>	<i>axū-ki</i>
Cilicia	<i>bayt-ik</i>	<i>xū-ki</i>

### 9.3.1.2.2 Verb inflection

A highly salient feature of all *qəltu* dialects is—as their label suggests—the inflectional morpheme *-tu* used for the 1sng s-stem verb. The retention of the final vowel, which is not attested for any other dialect outside Arabia proper, enables differentiation between the 1sng and 2msng, in contrast to all other dialects of the region.

<sup>14</sup> For further details see the lists in Procházka 2014: 137–40.

<sup>15</sup> An exception is Tikrit, where the very unusual form *-uk* is found, e.g. *ʔīduk* ‘your (f) hand’, *xašmuk* ‘your (f) nose’ (Johnstone 1969–73: 102).

<sup>16</sup> Given that the final short vowels of OA have usually been dropped in the dialects, it could be argued that the final *-i* in forms like *bēt-ki* has been restored by analogy with the feminine pronoun *ʔanti* and the corresponding inflectional suffix *-ti*. But such an approach would require the (implausible) presupposition that, during a certain phase in the history of the dialects, both the masculine and feminine pronoun ended in *-k*. This and the fact that invariable *-ki* is only found in regions which exhibit many other archaisms (e.g. Uzbekistan) make it more plausible to assume the preservation of the OA form. See also Owens’ detailed approach for reconstructing the different forms (2006: 246–50).

In the p-stem, both the ‘bedouin’ and the *qəltu* dialects preserve the final *-n* in the suffixes of 2fsng and 2 and 3mpl respectively (Table 9.3).

**Table 9.3 ‘Bedouin’ (*gilit*) and ‘sedentary’ (*qəltu*) dialect verb contrasts**

s-stem	Cilicia/group 1	‘bedouin’/group 2	Mosul/group 3a	OA
1sng	<i>ftaḥ-t</i>	<i>ḏarab-t</i>	<i>fataḥ-tu</i>	<i>fataḥ-tu</i>
2msng	<i>ftaḥ-t</i>	<i>ḏarab-t</i>	<i>fataḥ-t</i>	<i>fataḥ-ta</i>
p-stem				
2fsng	<i>tišrab-i</i>	<i>tišrab-īn</i>	<i>təšrab-īn</i>	<i>tašrab-īna</i>
2 com pl	<i>tišrab-u</i>	<i>tišrab-ūn</i>	<i>təšrab-ūn</i>	<i>tašrab-ūna</i>
3 com pl	<i>yišrab-u</i>	<i>yišrab-ūn</i>	<i>yəšrab-ūn</i>	<i>yašrab-ūna</i>

### 9.3.1.3 Syntax

#### 9.3.1.3.1 Indefinite noun–adjective phrases

All group 2 dialects of the region have a morpheme *-in*, primarily used to link an adjectival or participial attribute to its head noun if this is indefinite. Owing to its phonological similarity, this suffix is often called *tanwīn*, after the term for the indefinite marker in OA. But because its dialectal occurrence and functions differ significantly from those in OA, it is more appropriate to use the term ‘nominal linker’ (Owens 2006: 104) or ‘dialectal *tanwīn*’ (Holes 2004b: 89; cf. Ferrando’s chapter, this volume, which illustrates its use in twelfth-century Andalusi Arabic).

- (2) Syrian bedouin (Bettini 2006: 171/26)  
*gāl-at*                      *ī*      *walla*      *b-bīr-in*                      *qamīḡ*  
 say.s-stem-3fsng    yes    by God    in-well-linker    deep  
 ‘She said, “Yes, it is in a deep well”.’
- (3) Harran-Urfa (own data)  
*ʔal*    *ʿindu*                      *walad-in*      *lāḥiḡ*                      *yḡawwz-u*  
 rel    at-3msng    son-linker    ap.reach (age)    3msng-marry.p-stem.3msng  
*b-al-flūs*                      *haḏannič*  
 with-def a-money    dem.pl  
 ‘The one who has an adolescent son will marry him off with that money.’

The same morpheme is also used to link modifying elements other than adjectives to indefinite nouns, particularly prepositions with pronominal suffixes and clauses (also called asyndetic relative clauses).

- (4) Harran-Urfa (own data)  
*rabīʿ-in*                      *mitl-ak*  
 friend-linker    like-2msng  
 ‘a friend like you’

## (5) Harran-Urfa (own data)

*hināk šī muṭraḥ-in yiṭla<sup>s</sup> yisraḥ*  
 there exists place-linker 3msng-ascend.p-stem 3msng-graze.p-stem.

*bī-hin*

in-3fpl

‘There is a place where he (can) graze them.’

In the ‘bedouin’ dialects described here, there is no evidence that this morpheme marks indefiniteness in unmodified single nouns, as it does in some dialects of Arabia.<sup>17</sup> Thus it is actually not an indefinite marker in any general sense; cf. Ingham 1982: 53–4. The underlying principle of *tanwīn* is rather that of a ‘specific indefinite’ (Holes 2016: 132). Its original pragmatic function was to limit the scope of an indefinite noun, i.e. to distinguish completely unspecified indefinites from those which are still indefinite but further specified by a qualifying element. Formally, *tanwīn* is a morphosyntactical device to link an indefinite noun to a following component that specifies it (the latter can be an adjective, a relative clause, a prepositional phrase, etc.). The extraordinarily wide geographical distribution coupled with the substantially identical function of this linking morpheme suggests that it is an archaic feature harking back to pre-diasporic Arabic (Owens 2006: 102–6).

The ‘bedouin’ dialects treated here reflect different stages of the diachronic development of *tanwīn*. Harran-Urfa Arabic has more or less preserved the original system, as the adnominal linker is obligatory, or virtually so; cf. Ferrando, this volume. The usage of *tanwīn* is the default case, particularly in noun–adjective phrases.<sup>18</sup> In the other regions covered by this chapter a gradual decrease in the use of this linker can be observed. In the texts recorded during the last three decades from Shāwī ‘bedouin’ speakers in Syria it still occurs, but its usage is far from obligatory.<sup>19</sup> In the *gilit*-type dialects of the northern part of Iraq (group 3b)—both rural and urban—this feature seems to have been totally abandoned. This development corresponds to a general tendency as in most Gulf dialects, too, where dialectal *tanwīn* has rapidly decreased in the speech of the younger generations (Holes 2004b: 89; Holes’ chapter in this volume, §5.2).

### 9.3.1.3.2 Definite noun–adjective phrases

In all dialects on the northern periphery, the structure of definite attributive phrases differs from that in most other Arabic dialects in two respects: first, the definite marker is attached only to the adjective; and second, the noun appears in the construct state. This means the adjective is subordinated to the preceding noun.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Ingham 1986: 80 for the Āl Murra; dialectal *tanwīn* with unmodified nouns is also occasionally found in the Gulf dialects (Holes 2004b: 89–90).

<sup>18</sup> Thus most speakers accept only *ḥayyt-in ḥibīre* ‘a big snake’ and reject *\*ḥayye ḥibīre* as ungrammatical; even Turkish nouns and adjectives are connected by this linker, e.g. *bēz-in zēn* ‘a good nappy’ and *māmin šaklit-in belliye* ‘she has no clear symptom’.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Behnstedt (2000: 45off.) and Bettini (2006: 7ff.), who note that its use is relatively rare.



- (6) Tarsus: *ǧūwāt ʾmǧārt l-ʾkbīri* ‘inside the large cave’ (Procházka 2002a: 152)  
 Harran: *maḥramt al-ḥamra* ‘the red scarf’ (own data)  
 Mardin: *bīʿāt ʔl-ʿtāq* ‘the old churches’ (Grigore 2007: 216).  
 Āxəx: *maḥfarət lə-bʿīde* ‘the remote pit’ (Wittrich 2001: 148)

Thus in these dialects nominal and adjectival annexation-types are structurally identical with one another, with the exception that the adjective agrees with the head noun in gender and number. This feature is old: there is evidence of it in OA,<sup>20</sup> including the Koran. It is frequently attested in Middle Arabic (Blau 2002: 48) and in many other dialects, though sometimes restricted to toponyms and adverbial phrases such as ‘last year’ (see, e.g., Holes 2016: 213–15). The striking contrast with all other varieties (spoken and written) is that in the ‘sedentary’ dialects of the northern periphery this pattern has become the default case. In the ‘bedouin’ dialects of the Harran-Urfa region the construction seems to be used in free variation with the ‘standard’ pattern showing the article attached to both elements. As for the latter case, however, it shows the remarkable difference that *f* nouns are morphologically marked as if they were in the construct state (i.e. with *-t* appended):

- (7) Harran-Urfa (own data)
- |                     |                  |   |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|---|---------------------|------------------|
| <i>ghaw-t</i>       | <i>al-muṛṛ-a</i> | ~ | <i>al-ghaw-t</i>    | <i>al-muṛṛ-a</i> |
| coffee-constr       | def.a-bitter-f   |   | def.a-coffee-constr | def.a-bitter-f   |
| ‘the bitter coffee’ |                  |   |                     |                  |

The latter variant is also frequently attested for the related ‘bedouin’ dialects spoken in adjacent regions of Syria,<sup>21</sup> which indicates that the omission of the first article is probably a recent innovation of the northern dialects.

Because there is evidence for the definite noun phrase in which the head noun lacks the definite article throughout the history of Arabic and other Semitic languages (Retsö 2009: 5–30), it has been persuasively argued that this pattern represents an old feature harking back to proto-Arabic (Testen 1998: 163–5; Pat-El 2009: 38, 42–4). Since archaisms often survive on the periphery, this pattern may well be a pre-diasporic feature. Without going into detail, we can state that it was frequent in older, pre-classical layers of Arabic, but has hardly ever been the default case, as it is in many dialects of our region. Thus, the generalization of this feature is likely to be an innovation that could only occur where Arabic is spoken in a minority setting with virtually no influence from MSA.<sup>22</sup> This is corroborated by the situation in Harran-Urfa, where this construction is apparently recent and has not yet become the default case. An important factor in explaining the ‘success’ of the development described here is the complete redundancy of the article attached to the noun—a fact which certainly facilitated its omission.

<sup>20</sup> A Greek papyrus dated AD 530 includes the Arabic phrase *bayth al-axbar* ‘the very large first floor unit’ (Al-Jallad et al. 2013: 32).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Bettini 2006: 154/11 *al-qurft al-mqaffala* ‘the locked room.’

<sup>22</sup> This hypothesis is supported by the fact that this feature is more or less absent from the closely related dialects of Mosul, Dêr iz-Zôr, and the Khawetna.

9.3.1.3.3 *Relative clauses*

In all ‘sedentary’ dialects relative clauses are asyndetically linked to an indefinite head noun by pure juxtaposition. In the ‘bedouin’ dialects, however, the morpheme *-in* also links a qualifying clause to its preceding head noun (see §9.3.1.3.1).

A characteristic trait of most dialects on the northern periphery<sup>23</sup> is that the construction of relative clauses referring to a definite head noun exactly parallels noun–adjective and noun–noun phrases, i.e. the noun has no article and appears in the construct state. This means that the pattern described in §9.3.1.3.2 was generalized and applied to definite relative clauses linked by a relative particle.<sup>24</sup>

- (8) Eastern Anatolia (Wittrich 2001: 167)

*hak-at-li*                      *hakkōy-ət*    *lə*    *staxbar-tū-wa*                      *ʿala-ya*  
tell.s-stem-3fsng-to-1sng    story-constr    rel    ask.s-stem-1sng-3fsng    on-3fsng  
‘She told me the story about which I had asked her.’

- (9) Cilicia (Procházka 2002a: 159)

*bi-mayy-t*                      *il*    *ma-tiġla*  
with-water-constr    rel    modifier-3fsng-boil.p-stem  
‘with water that is boiling’

The same feature is also found in the ‘bedouin’-type dialects of the Harran-Urfa region, though not as a default but besides hybrid constructions with both definite marking and construct state at the head noun.

- (10) Harran-Urfa (own data)

*ʔalli*    *b-šariṭ*                      *tinṭi-ni*                      *l-*  
except    on-condition    2msng-bring.p-stem-1sng    to  
*az-zlim-t*                      *al*    *aṭʔlb-u*                      *ʔāni!*  
def.a-man-constr    rel    1sng-demand.p-stem-3msng    1sng  
‘Except on condition that you bring me the man whom I want (to marry)’

The unique development (cf. Retsö 2009: 21) that definite relative clauses are constructed by analogy with noun–adjective/noun phrases is certainly an innovative feature of these dialects and is described in this chapter only for reasons of clarity.

9.3.1.4 *Lexical features*

There are several archaic lexical features shared by most ‘sedentary’ dialects: pattern VIII *iftaham* for the verb ‘to understand’; the preposition *xalf* instead of reflexes of *warāʔa*; and *qəšəʔ* ‘to see’. The latter must have been more widespread because a fossilized reflex of this verb is found in the Damascene presentative *šaʕ* < *qšaʕ* ‘look at!’.<sup>25</sup> Many

<sup>23</sup> Exceptions are some isolated Anatolian dialects, e.g. those belonging to the Siirt group (Lahdo 2010: 178; Retsö 2009: 22–3).

<sup>24</sup> For further details and examples cf. Jastrow 1978: 123–4; Grigore 2007: 309–12; Sasse 1971: 131.

<sup>25</sup> Lentin 2006: 549; the verb is also attested for Cyprus, rural Egypt, and Yemen (Borg 2004: 388). Landberg (1942: 2061ff.) proposed another etymology for the similar South Arabian particle *šaʕ*, deriving it from the root *šʕy* and the verb *tašaʕa* ‘to have a look’ (see also Fischer 1959: 199ff.).

*qaltu*-dialects exhibit the verb *tāq* ‘to be able’ (< *ʔaṭāqa*); *ḍayʿa* ‘village’ is found in Syria and Anatolia, but not in Iraq.

### 9.3.2 (SHARED) INTERNAL INNOVATIONS

#### 9.3.2.1 Phonology

##### 9.3.2.1.1 Consonants

In all ‘sedentary’ dialects west of a line through the eastern outskirts of Aleppo the interdental fricatives have shifted to postdental stops, i.e.  $\underline{d} > d$ ,  $\underline{t} > t$ ,  $\underline{ḍ} > ḍ$ .<sup>26</sup> Among the dialects of group 3 this shift is rare and, with one exception, found only in a few dialects spoken by non-Muslims.<sup>27</sup> Two other kinds of shift rarely found elsewhere in the Arab world occur almost exclusively in some Anatolian dialects: (1) The shift to sibilants, i.e.  $\underline{d} > z$ ,  $\underline{t} > s$ ,  $\underline{ḍ} > ẓ$ ,<sup>28</sup> and (2) the shift to labiodental fricatives—i.e.  $\underline{d} > v$ ,  $\underline{t} > f$ ,  $\underline{ḍ} > ɸ$  in the Siirt group and a few other places.<sup>29</sup>

A very characteristic innovation of all Tigris dialects is the shift  $r > ġ$ , which resulted in the merger of etymological *r* and *ġ*. There is evidence of this already in the ninth century, when it was described as a peculiar kind of speech defect that was especially common ‘among people of the upper-class, prominent people, and the eloquent and the learned’ (al-Jāḥiẓ 1948: I: 37).<sup>30</sup> Since the  $r > ġ$  shift is rare<sup>31</sup> and since substratum influence can be excluded, one is tempted to assume that this pronunciation began to spread as people tried to imitate an upper-class speech habit. However, such an assumption has to remain purely hypothetical, as we do not know whether the speech defect described by al-Jāḥiẓ was, e.g., a dying relic that prominent people were still clinging on to, or, e.g., a flourishing innovation that was being copied by others. It is worth mentioning that during the thirteenth century there is evidence of the same sound shift in the Jewish dialect of Aleppo; see Lentin, this volume, §7.3.4. This may well be the result of the close contact between the Jewish communities of Syria and those of Iraq.

A hallmark of all ‘bedouin’ dialects is the shift of *q* to *g*, the latter possibly reflecting an OA voiced allophone [G]. Most likely this shift occurred during the first centuries after the conquest, but it is hardly a pre-diasporic feature (Holes 1991: 667–71).<sup>32</sup> All ‘bedouin’-type dialects of our region, including Hatay, exhibit conditioned affrication of /g/ and /k/ in the vicinity of front vowels. In the majority of dialects /g/ shifts to ġ, and /k/ to č.

<sup>26</sup> Behnstedt 1997a: map 1; Arnold 1998: 33; for Cilicia see Procházka 2002b: 92.

<sup>27</sup> In Diyarbakır (Jastrow 1978: 34), Christian Baghdadi (Abu Haidar 1991: 7–9), Jewish dialects of Kurdistan (Jastrow 1990b: 27). The exception is Rabīʿa (Abu Haidar 2004: 4).

<sup>28</sup> This shift is also attested for one village in NE Syria (Behnstedt 1997a: map 1, no. 159) and the village of Bəḥzāni in Northern Iraq (Jastrow 1978: 36).

<sup>29</sup> For details see Jastrow 1978: 34–9.

<sup>30</sup> The linguistic details and historical sources are discussed in Blanc 1964: 20–5.

<sup>31</sup> There is evidence of this feature from the other edge of the Arabic-speaking world: in some archaic Moroccan dialects, among them that of Meknes (Roux and Stroomer 2008: xi).

<sup>32</sup> Above all in bedouinized urban dialects, many words exhibiting *q* are also found; cf. for Baghdad Al-Ani 1976: 52.

## (11) Harran-Urfa (own data)

‘*ariq* > \*‘*irig* > ‘*riḡ*, but p-stem *yī‘rag* ‘to sweat’

*katif* > čätif, but pl *ktūf* ‘shoulder’<sup>33</sup>

The affrication can be explained by a widespread phonological trend in many languages. In his comparative study on affrication in Arabia, Holes roughly dates the affrication as found in our region between the eleventh and eighteenth centuries, which makes it a relatively recent feature (Holes 1991: 666ff.). A possible piece of evidence that affrication had not yet reached the region in the seventeenth century is that during his visit to Harran the Turkish traveller Evliya Çelebi mentions the tribe of Gēs (i.e. Qays), the name of which is pronounced /ḡēs/ today; cf. Oppenheim 1939: 227.

In the ‘bedouin’ dialects spoken between the Euphrates and Urfa, /ḡ/ has shifted to *q*, e.g. Harran-Urfa *ḡanam* > *qanam* ‘sheep’, *biḡāl* > *bqāl* ‘mules’.<sup>34</sup> This shift can be seen as the final stage of a push-and-drag chain process. It started with the change from *q* to *g* in the ‘bedouin’ dialects (see also Edzard 2009: 2), which may have been an important factor for the widespread fronting of original *g* to ḡ. However, only in the dialects of this region were all sounds of this array eventually fronted (Table 9.4).

**TABLE 9.4 The phonological development of /ḡ, x, q, g, k/ in the ‘bedouin’ Arabic dialects of the Northern Fertile Crescent**

earliest Arabic			
ḡ	q	g	–
x	–	k	–
‘bedouin’ Arabic in general			
ḡ	→	g	ḡ
x	–	k	–
Shāwī ‘bedouin’ Arabic			
→	q	g	ḡ
front vowel environment			ḡ
x	–	k	
front vowel environment			č

<sup>33</sup> There are many exceptions to the general phonological rule that affrication occurs only in a front-vowel environment because of the tendency to harmonize sng and pl nouns as well as s-stem and p-stem verbs. Thus some dialects have *dīč* pl *dyūk* ‘cock’ but others *dīč* pl *dyūč*; in Harran-Urfa Arabic ‘to look’ is both *dahḡag* / *ydaḡḡig* and *dahḡag* / *ydaḡḡig*.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Behnstedt 1997a: map 7; Procházka 2003: 79; the same in some dialects of Hatay (Arnold 1998: 168). This sound change is also common in many Gulf dialects (Holes 2016: 53–4).

9.3.2.1.2 *Vowels*

A striking feature of all ‘sedentary’ dialects is that the phonemic contrast between OA *i* and *u* is almost completely neutralized (*i/u* > ə or, in Hatay and Cilicia, *i*).

- (12) Hatay/Mosul (Arnold 1998: 46; own data)

*ism* > *ism/əs̱m* ‘name’

*umm* > *imm/əmm* ‘mother’

Another widespread phenomenon of the ‘sedentary’ dialects is that historical short /a/ has shifted to *i/ə* if in unstressed, pre-tonic, closed syllables. There are, however, slight differences with regard to the patterns which are subject to this change. Everywhere the nominal pattern CaCCān has become CiCCān, and CaCCāC has mostly changed to CiCCāC. The vowel sequence *a-a* in the perfect CaCCaC-C of pattern II verbs has remained unchanged in most Iraqi and Anatolian dialects.<sup>35</sup>

9.3.2.1.3 *Pausal forms*

A common phenomenon of both the ‘bedouin’-type and the ‘sedentary’-type dialects is the devoicing of consonants in word-final position before a pause. This feature is much stronger in the dialects spoken on the northern edges of the region, where it applies to most voiced consonants.

- (13) Devoicing

Cilicia: *ġarb* > *ġarp#* ‘west’, *arḍ* > *arṭ#* ‘earth’, *maqṭūṣ* > *miqṭūḥ#* ‘cut’ (Procházka 2002a: 63)<sup>36</sup>

Anatolia (Mardin) *īd* > *īt#* ‘hand’, *bīḍ* > *bīṭ#* ‘white (pl)’, (Siirt) *ġēmeṣ* > *ġēmeḥ#* ‘mosque’ (Jastrow 1978: 98)

In Mosul Arabic devoicing applies particularly to the stops /b/ and /d/, but not to fricatives (Jastrow 1979: 41). The ‘bedouin’-type dialects on the northern periphery share this phenomenon. It is both attested for some villages of Hatay<sup>37</sup> and for the Harran-Urfa dialects, e.g. *‘amīḡ* > *‘amīč#* ‘deep’, *aṭluṣ* > *aṭluḥ#* ‘I ascend’ (own data). Devoicing is also reported for ‘bedouin’ dialects spoken in Israel<sup>38</sup> and is most likely a relatively old feature which has been preserved on the periphery. The fact that it is a phonological rule in Turkish may well have reinforced the high frequency of this feature in all Arabic dialects spoken in Turkey.

9.3.2.2 *Morphology*

Internal morphological innovation occurs because of various linguistic processes, especially grammaticalization, analogy and intra-paradigmatic convergence, and reduction and simplification. Because most innovations cannot be ascribed to one of these processes alone, it is more appropriate to present the data within morphological categories.

<sup>35</sup> Only in Daragözü, Jewish Baghdadi (Jastrow 1978: 247; Blanc 1964: 108), and Tikrit has *i* replaced *a*, e.g. *‘illāmtu* ‘I instructed’ (Johnstone 1969–73: 92).

<sup>36</sup> For Hatay see Arnold 1998: 43ff.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. *bāṣ* < *bāṣ<sup>ph</sup>* ‘he sold’; in Han Muratpaşa also with other consonants, e.g. *niṣat#* ‘he asked’, *azrak#* ‘blue’, *čitap* ‘he wrote’ (Arnold 1998: 172).

<sup>38</sup> Though restricted to *b*, *d*, *g*; cf. Rosenhouse 1984: 77.

### 9.3.2.2.1 Personal pronouns, independent and bound

The closed-list class of independent and bound pronouns offers very good examples of the various mechanisms that have led to internal innovations often shared by several dialects in the region.

As has been mentioned, only the ‘bedouin’-type dialects have preserved gender distinction in all forms of the 2nd and 3rd persons, whereas ‘sedentary’ dialects have reduced this distinction to the singular only.<sup>39</sup> Gender distinction in the plural is also absent from the dialects spoken by the ʿAlawīs in Cilicia and Hatay, although it has been preserved in their cognate dialects in western Syria, which indicates that this feature is vulnerable to population movement. Cf. Procházka 2014: 138.

A very clear case of innovation because of alignment within a paradigm is found in Cilician Arabic, where the 2nd-person pronouns exhibit initial *h* by analogy with the pronouns of the 3rd person (Table 9.5).

**Table 9.5 Personal pronouns in Cilicia**  
(Procházka 2002a: 64)

	2	3
msng	<i>hint</i> (< * <i>int</i> )	<i>hūwi</i>
fsng	<i>hinti</i> (< * <i>inti</i> )	<i>hīyi</i>
pl	<i>hintu</i> (< * <i>intu</i> )	<i>hinni</i>

Cilician Arabic shares this rare feature with some ʿAlawī dialects in western Syria and southern Hatay, and with Central Asian Arabic (Behnstedt 1997a: map 251; Lewin 1969: 18; Ingham 2006: 30; Zimmermann 2009: 615). Because the Cilician ʿAlawīs came from Syria, they certainly brought this feature with them to Turkey. The case of Central Asia, however, is most likely explained by an independent development that was triggered by the same tendency towards alignment within the paradigm.

The Siirt and Sason dialects of Anatolia exhibit the reverse case of intra-paradigmatic convergence—that is, the forms of the 3rd person have lost their initial *h* to align with those of the 2nd person (Table 9.6).

**Table 9.6 Personal pronouns in Tillo/**  
**Anatolia (Lahdo 2010: 68)<sup>40</sup>**

	3
msng	<i>uwwe</i>
fsng	<i>iyye</i>
pl	<i>anne</i>

<sup>39</sup> For further details regarding gender-distinct plural pronouns cf. Procházka 2014.

<sup>40</sup> For the other dialects see Talay 2001: 76 and Akkuş (forthcoming). In all these dialects the initial *h*- is also absent in demonstrative pronouns and adverbs.

The 1pl has—as in OA—an initial *n* in almost all ‘sedentary’ dialects, a feature absent from the ‘bedouin’-type dialects, where *iḥna* is the most common form.<sup>41</sup> The latter could have been developed owing to alignment with the 2nd persons (*inte*, *inti*, *intu*), although dissimilation of the first of the two *n*-sounds in underlying *\*niḥna* is possible too. (The latter is given by Fischer and Jastrow 1980: 80.)

Another common process is morphological alignment with related categories, in the case of pronouns particularly with the corresponding pronominal suffixes and the inflectional suffixes of the *s*-stem verb. A striking example for such alignment is the final *i* in the 1sng pronoun *āni/ani*, which is a typical Shāwi-‘bedouin’ feature, in contrast to the ‘sedentary’ *ana*. It can be explained by alignment with the corresponding suffix *-i/-ni* (Isaksson 1999: 59).<sup>42</sup> In Mosul and a few Anatolian dialects all 3rd-person independent pronouns were completely restructured by isolating the element *hi-* (from the 3fsng) and attaching the corresponding bound pronouns (Table 9.7).

**TABLE 9.7 Independent and bound 3rd-person pronouns (cf. Jastrow 1973: 37–40; Jastrow 1978: 127–8; Talay 2001: 76)**

	3msng		3fsng		3pl	
	free	bound	free	bound	free	bound
Mosul	<i>hīnu</i>	<i>ṽ-nu</i>	<i>hīya</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>hīyām</i>	<i>-ām</i>
Daragözü	<i>hīyu</i>	<i>-u</i>	<i>hīya</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>hīyān</i>	<i>-ān</i>

Alignment with the inflectional suffixes is often found in the pronouns of the 2nd person (Arnold 1998: 97; Procházka 2014: 140). The plural ending *-tu* is itself an innovation because OA has *-tum* like Mosul (Table 9.8).

**TABLE 9.8 2nd-person pronouns**

	msng		fsng		pl	
	pronoun	s-stem	pronoun	s-stem	pronoun	s-stem
Hatay (group 1)	<i>int</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>inti</i>	<i>-ti</i>	<i>intu</i>	<i>-tu</i>
Urfa (group 2)	<i>inte</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>inti</i>	<i>-ti</i>	<i>intu</i>	<i>-taw</i>
Mosul (group 3)	<i>anta</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>anti</i>	<i>-ti</i>	<i>antām</i>	<i>-tām</i>

<sup>41</sup> See the list of pronouns in Procházka 2006–7: 125.

<sup>42</sup> The final *-na* (in *iḥna*, *niḥna* etc.) of 1pl in contrast to OA *naḥnu* is in fact also the result of alignment with the bound pronoun *-nā*. Because this feature is found in the majority of Arabic dialects, it is certainly a pre-diasporic development and thus not treated here in detail.

In all Syrian and Anatolian dialects both the independent and the bound pronouns exhibit *n* instead of etymological *m* in the forms of 2 and 3pl. This is most likely due to Aramaic influence and therefore treated in §9.3.3.1.

A striking feature of all ‘sedentary’ dialects<sup>43</sup> is that the 3fsng and pl pronominal suffixes have variants without initial *-h-*. In most dialects these forms are regularly used after a consonant, but often also after vowels other than *-ā* (Table 9.9).

TABLE 9.9 Pronominal suffixes without initial *-h-*<sup>44</sup>

	3fsng ‘her house’	3pl ‘their house’
Cyprus	<i>payt-a</i>	<i>payt-on</i>
Cilicia	<i>bayt-a</i>	<i>bayt-in</i>
Mardin	<i>bayt-a</i>	<i>bayt-ən</i>
Mosul	<i>bēt-a</i>	<i>bēt-əm</i>
Tikrīt	<i>bayt-a</i>	<i>bayt-im</i>
Baghdad (Christian)	<i>bēt-a</i>	<i>bēt-əm</i>

In Cyprus, northern Syria, and Cilicia<sup>45</sup> these forms are treated like other vowel-initial suffixes, i.e. they do not affect stress: Aleppo *sáġrta* like *sáġrti*, but *saġrātna* ‘her/my/our tree’ (Sabuni 1980: 186).<sup>46</sup> A phonological rule in the *qeltu* dialects requires stress on the syllable preceding a pronominal suffix (Jastrow 2007: 417).<sup>47</sup> It is striking that the elision of *h* occurs in all dialects regardless of whether the plural forms exhibit final *n* or *m*. This, and its wide geographical distribution, clearly indicates that the dropping of *h* must be an old feature—a presumption corroborated by its existence in Cypriot Arabic, which has been isolated from other dialects since at least the thirteenth century (Borg 1985: 6). Owens (2006: 242) posits that *h*-less variants of the suffixes may well have existed in some pre-diasporic Arabic dialects. Because of striking parallels with Neo-Aramaic dialects, Arnold and Behnstedt (1993: 79) suggested an Aramaic substrate for this phenomenon. The two hypotheses can be combined by assuming that speakers of Aramaic tended to adopt the *h*-less variants when learning Arabic because they were paralleled in their native tongue.

<sup>43</sup> Exceptions are found in the Euphrates group (Behnstedt 1997a: map 64).

<sup>44</sup> Cyprus: Borg 1985: 136; Cilicia: Procházka 2002a: 65; Mardin: Grigore 2007: 230; Mosul: Jastrow 2007: 419; Tikrit: Johnstone 1969–73: 101ff.; Baghdad: Abu Haidar 1991: 81.

<sup>45</sup> Mostly identical with *v/c* suffixes, but e.g. *nʿēwna* ‘we help her’ versus *nʿēwinkin* ‘we help you’ (Procházka 2002a: 108).

<sup>46</sup> Further south, for instance in Damascus, *h* has dropped too but the stress pattern remained as with consonantal suffixes, e.g. *šažrāta* like *šažrātna*, but *šažrāti* ‘her/our/my tree’.

<sup>47</sup> Owens (2006: 43) maintains that this rule originated in the generalization of the stress shift in the sense that all vowel-initial suffixes were treated like those which originally had an initial *h*.



An innovation found mainly in dialects along the Tigris from Diyarbakır to Baghdad<sup>48</sup> is the allomorphic variant *-nu* of the pronominal suffix of the 3rd person. What apparently happened is that the final syllable *-nu* in verbal forms such as *yəqšaʿūnu* ‘they see him’, was generalized and used after all words ending in a vowel.<sup>49</sup>

In the ‘bedouin’ dialects, the affricated allomorph of the 2fsng pronominal suffix, which originally appeared only after a front vowel, i.e. suffixed to words that end in a consonant (e.g. *bēt-ič* ‘your (f) house’), has spread to all other forms. Thus it is also attached to words ending in a vowel, e.g. *abū-č* ‘your (f) father’, where the affrication is not phonologically motivated. See §9.3.2.1.1 and n. 33.

Interesting examples of analogy are frequently found but local. In some ‘bedouin’ dialects of Hatay, for instance, all singular pronominal suffixes attached to the preposition *l-* exhibit a final *-a*: 3m *lūwa*, 3f *lēha*, 2m *lēka*, 2f *lēča*, 1 *līya* (Arnold 1998: 184). Etymologically this cannot be expected for the 2nd persons.

### 9.3.2.2.2 *Interrogative adverbs and prepositions*

In both categories many new forms have developed through grammaticalization. There is a clear tendency to bimorphemic structures for interrogatives consisting of an interrogative element and a former noun or an originally simple interrogative.<sup>50</sup> Frequently, ‘innovative’ and ‘inherited’ interrogatives coexist in a dialect. The underlying structures of innovations are often the same in dialects that belong to different groups or are geographically far apart, whereas sometimes adjacent villages exhibit distinct forms. This should be taken as a caveat that shared features are not necessarily the outcome of a common origin, but can also be the result of parallel developments which are based on similar principles for coining new words.<sup>51</sup>

The first element in interrogatives is in most cases a reflex of *ayyu šayʿ* ‘which thing?’ attested in pre-Classical Arabic. Because of irregular phonological processes it has been reduced to *ʔay-*, *ʔaš-*, or *š-* and is usually affixed to the following (pro)noun. In a second stage of grammaticalization the two words merged and became interrogative adverbs. Distinctive of the whole region are reflexes of *\*ayy šayʿ qadd* (or in a few cases *qadr*) ‘which quantity?’ that serves to express ‘how much?’.

- (14) ‘how much?’ (Cf. Procházka 2002a: 135; Arnold 1998: 114; Behnstedt 2000: 457; Talay 1999: 64.)

Cilicia: *ašqa*, *ašqadar*

Hatay: *ašqadd*

Bedouin: *šgadd*

Khawetna: *šqadd*

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Jastrow 1978: 273ff.; Jastrow 2007: 419; Johnstone 1969–73: 101ff.; Blanc 1964: 64 (Baghdad, only Christians and Muslims).

<sup>49</sup> In the Anatolian dialect of Fāsken an intermediate stage has been preserved: there *-nu* is only used after *-ū* (Jastrow 1978: 273).

<sup>50</sup> Versteegh (2004: 48) claimed that these transparent compound forms are perhaps older than the simple ones.

<sup>51</sup> When the OA *matā* ‘when?’ has been replaced by a new word originally meaning ‘which time?’ in two different dialects (as in some dialects described here and in Morocco), this can easily be an independent development, as the underlying idea of coining such a phrase is very natural.

A feature which distinguishes the dialects of our region from those further south is that in the latter the interrogative element is often postposed, e.g. Damascus *ʔaddēš*. Some ‘bedouin’ dialects in NE Syria use *kuṭr* ‘amount’ instead of *qadr*, e.g. *škuṭur* ‘how much?’ (Behnstedt 2000: 457).

An identical development is found with the terms for ‘how?’, which are mostly compounds of an interrogative element and *lawn* ‘colour’: Hatay bedouin *šnōn/šlōn*, Mardin *ašwan*, Mosul *aššōn*, Tikrit *šlōn* (Arnold 1998: 186; Jastrow 1978: 118–19; Johnstone 1969–73: 105).

Different nouns have served to coin new words to express ‘where?’ among them *šawb* ‘direction’: e.g. Harran-Urfa *aššōb* (< \**aš-šōb*), Siirt *ayšab/ēšab*, Mosul *ēšab* (Procházka 2003: 80; Jastrow 1978: 121; Blanc 1964: 138). In some dialects of Hatay ‘where?’ is expressed by *ʔaynaḥall* (< *ayna maḥall* ‘which place?’, Arnold 1998: 112). The same semantic concept, based on *ayna mawḏiʕ*, is found in several peripheral dialects of Anatolia, e.g. Daragözü *ammaḥ* (Jastrow 1978: 120ff.). In Mardin and a couple of Iraqi dialects the new word for ‘when?’ goes back to the expression ‘which time?’ (\**ayy šayʔ waqt*): Mardin *ayšwaxt*, Bəḥzāni *ašwaq*, Baghdad *šwaqet/šwaket* (Grigore 2007: 249; Jastrow 1978: 122; Blanc 1964: 138).

Besides such noun-based forms, one frequently finds terms in which the interrogative element has been attached to an originally interrogative adverb, probably to make its interrogative character more transparent. Typical of the north-west corner of the region is *škif* ‘how’ (< *š* + *kayf* ‘how?’) (Hatay: Arnold 1998: 114; Cilicia: Procházka 2002a: 134). The same happened with the word for ‘when?’, e.g. Mosul *ēmati* (< *ayy* ‘which?’ + *matā* ‘when?’; Blanc 1964: 138).

Grammaticalization processes in prepositions are especially frequent in dialects on the periphery. Relatively often new forms are the product of grammaticalized nouns denoting parts of the body. This is true for Anatolian *qfā* ‘behind’ < *qafā* ‘nape’ (Jastrow 1973: 98), Cilician *ğōfāt* ‘inside’ < *ğawf* ‘stomach, interior’ (Procházka 2002a: 142), Shāwi bedouin *bgaḷb* ‘inside’ < *bi-qalb* ‘in the heart’ (Bettini 2006: 42), *bsāgt* ‘(together) with’ < *bi-sāq* ‘at one’s leg’ (own data).

### 9.3.2.2.3 Presentatives

Presentatives play an important role as discourse markers, especially in unmonitored everyday speech. Of special interest are those particles with initial *k-* or *kw-* because they are typical of many ‘sedentary’ dialects from Cilicia to Eastern Anatolia (but not in Iraq). Many studies claim that forms such as Aleppine *kō* are shortened variants of *lēko*, which is widespread in Syria (Fischer 1959: 198). Table 9.10 shows that almost identical forms can be found from the Mediterranean to the Tigris.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> For more variants cf. Procházka 2016.

**TABLE 9.10 Presentative particles I<sup>53</sup>**

	Hatay (Keskinci)	Aleppo	Qarṭmīn	Āzəx
msng	<i>kōha</i>	<i>kō</i>	<i>kū</i>	<i>kū</i>
fsng	<i>kēha</i>	<i>kē</i>	<i>kī</i>	<i>kī</i>
pl	<i>kenna</i>	<i>kənne</i>	<i>kanne</i>	<i>kən</i>

The forms given here clearly indicate that *kō* cannot be a shortened form of *lēko* because such an explanation does not fit the f and pl forms (*lēka*, *lēkon*). Moreover, presentatives based on *lē-* are completely alien to the Anatolian dialects. An explanation that is much more likely is that these forms consist of the deictic particle *k-* followed by a shortened form of the personal pronoun.<sup>54</sup> More or less the same picture can be drawn for the variants that exhibit a second consonant after the initial *k*.

**TABLE 9.11 Presentative particles II<sup>55</sup>**

	Cilicia	Ariḥa	Qarṭmīn	Āzəx
msng	<i>kwa</i>	<i>kwā-k</i>	<i>kwā</i>	<i>kwā</i>
fsng	<i>kya</i>	<i>kyā-k</i>	<i>kyā</i>	<i>kyā</i>
pl	no data	<i>kna-hni</i>	<i>kənā</i>	<i>kənā</i>

These forms too can be analysed as a merger of the deictic particle *ka-* and the independent pronouns: thus *kwa* < *\*ka-wa* < *\*ka-huwa*.<sup>56</sup>

#### 9.3.2.2.4 Existential particles

A common trait of all modern dialects is particles that express existence and correspond to English ‘there is/are’. Cf. Eid 2008: 83–6. The overwhelming majority of the dialects in the region exhibit forms which go back to a locative preposition ‘in’ and the pronominal suffix of the 3msng. See also Lentin, this volume, §7.11. As a rule, the ‘sedentary’ dialects show reflexes of the preposition *fī*, and most ‘bedouin’-type dialects reflexes of *bi-*, thus *fī*, *fīh*, *bī*, *bū*, and the like.<sup>57</sup> Typically Iraqi is *aku* (negated *māku*), for which a couple of contradictory etymologies have been suggested.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Hatay: Arnold 1998: 110, n. 212; Aleppo: Sabuni 1980: 75; Qarṭmīn: Jastrow 1978: 139; Āzəx: Wittrich 2001: 36.

<sup>54</sup> An almost identical construction is found in the ‘bedouin’-type dialects of Bahrain: *ka-hiyya yāya!* ‘Here she comes!’ (Holes 2001: 447).

<sup>55</sup> Cilicia: Procházka 2002a: 150; Ariḥa (20 kilometres south of Idlib): Behnstedt 1993: 92; Qarṭmīn: Jastrow 1978: 140; Āzəx: Wittrich 2001: 36.

<sup>56</sup> Jastrow (1978: 140) less convincingly argues *kwa* < *kū* + deictic particle *hā*.

<sup>57</sup> An overview of the negated forms is found in Behnstedt 1997a: map 226.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Rubin 2005: 63 (with additional sources); Holes 2016: 17; Holes, this volume.

The ‘bedouin’-type dialects of the Harran-Urfa region exhibit the unique form *šī*, clearly a reflex of *šay* ‘(some)thing’. The only hitherto known parallels to the use of *šay* as an existential marker are found in South Arabia, particularly in Omani Arabic, but also in Yemeni and Gulf Arabic.<sup>59</sup> The negated form *māmiš* (< *mā min šay* ‘there is nothing’) is also widespread in South Iraqi and Gulf dialects (Holes 2016: 111, n. 32); in its variant *māmin* the last element of the original phrase was deleted.

(15) Harran-Urfa (own data)

*Bini* ‘*Iḡil* kull-*ha* ‘*ašīre waḥd-e* ‘*amma* ‘*imyt* *fuxud* *šī*  
 sons ‘*Iḡil* all-3fsng tribe one-f but hundred subtribe there is  
 ‘All Bani ‘Ijl belong to one single tribe, but there are a hundred subtribes.’

### 9.3.2.3 Syntax

#### 9.3.2.3.1 Second object pronoun

In most ‘sedentary’ dialects independent forms of the personal pronouns serve to mark a second pronominalized object.<sup>60</sup> This occurs mainly with three-actant verbs, in particular those meaning ‘to give’, ‘to bring’, ‘to show’, etc. In Syrian and Iraqi dialects these pronouns exactly correspond to the independent forms or are only slightly shortened, whereas in Anatolia the same forms as for the copula (§9.3.3.2) are used.

(16) Mosul (Jastrow 2004b: 143/8)

*mā nəʕī-ki* *hīyām*  
 neg 1pl-give.p-stem-2fsng 3pl  
 ‘We do not give them to you (f).’

This usage of the independent pronouns can be regarded as a rather old innovation of the dialects in question. Retsö (1987: 232) convincingly argued that it developed from the overt tendency to avoid two object-marking bound morphemes in a sequence (as is possible in CLA). Retsö rejected the explanation by Correll (1974) that this construction evolved from (originally) nominal patterns such as Syrian *baddi huwwe* ‘I want him’ (lit. ‘my wish [is] he’). Typologically this pattern reflects an even older stage, since independent pronouns in Semitic were used for subjects and objects alike (Retsö 1987: 235).

In the remaining, particularly ‘bedouin’-type, dialects the second pronoun is attached to the particle *yā-*, which reflects OA *ʔiyyā-*.

#### 9.3.2.3.2 Indefinite marker

A hallmark of *all* group 3 dialects is an indefinite marker for nouns. The form used throughout is proclitic *fad*, which etymologically derives from *fard* ‘individual’. The presence of the same item in the Central Asian Arabic dialects (which arrived there in

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Holes 2008b: 485; Holes 2016: 113; Wilmsen 2014: 121–3 with further etymological remarks.

<sup>60</sup> With the restriction that the argument can only be a 3rd person.

the early eighth century) indicates that the ‘bedouin’-type dialects of the Fertile Crescent must have adopted this seemingly old feature later.<sup>61</sup> There are no in-depth studies on the exact syntactic function of Iraqi *fad*. Particularly puzzling is the functional difference between nouns used with and without the indefinite article (Edzard 2006: 189ff.).

A unique feature of Kozluk-Sason Arabic is the enclitic indefinite marker *-ma* (Jastrow 1978: 110), the usage of which reflects the Kurdish indefinite article *-ek*.

- (17) Sason (Akkuş forthcoming)  
*naze masag-e atsūra-ma*  
 Naze catch.s-stem-3fsng bird-indef  
 ‘Naze caught a bird.’

Although definite and indefinite marking in Kozluk-Sason Arabic obviously follows the Kurdish patterns, the most convincing etymology of the enclitic marker is to see it as a reflex of OA *-mā* (e.g. *kitābun mā* ‘a certain book’). If this is correct, these remote Arabic dialects would be unique in preserving this OA morphological device, which is not found in any other Arabic dialect.

### 9.3.2.3.3 *Analytic genitive*

The so-called genitive particle—a typical innovation of most Arabic dialects (Eksell 2006b: 82; B&W 2005: 17)—is also found in our region. However, there is great diversity with regard to both the forms of the particle and the range of its use. This corroborates the assumption that analytic instead of synthetic attribution of nouns may be a relatively old innovation in Arabic, but has developed independently in the different dialects, following a common linguistic tendency.

In the ‘sedentary’ dialects of northern Syria *taba<sup>c</sup>* prevails, in the Iraqi dialects *māl ~ mālāt*; all Anatolian dialects have *ḍēl(a)* or *ḍīl(a)*. The *qaltu* dialect of the Khawetna and the ‘bedouin’ dialects exhibit a variety of forms, among them *gay*, *gī* (f *gīt*), *šīt*, and *hnīt*. See Behnstedt 1997a: map 249; Jastrow 1979: 66; Vocke and Waldner 1982: 169; Talay 1999: 65. The fact that in several dialects a large number of variants are used may indicate that these particles are prone to influence from neighbouring or prestige dialects. Thus the typical urban Syrian *taba<sup>c</sup>/tiba<sup>c</sup>* is today also used in the country’s ‘bedouin’ dialects in addition to the original forms given above (Behnstedt 2000: 453). Morphologically the genitive particles of the region are very lacking in homogeneity, ranging from invariable ones to forms which agree with the head noun in gender and others which agree in both gender and number. A characteristic of some Iraqi dialects, e.g. Mosul, is that the whole phrase can be definite even if the head noun is morphologically marked as indefinite.<sup>62</sup> With the exception of the few large cities of the

<sup>61</sup> As the closely related dialects of the Anatolian branch do not use *fad* (with the exception of Diyarbakır), it has been argued that it developed independently in Iraq and Central Asia (in the latter under influence of Turkic and Iranian languages). This is, however, not very likely and there are several other (old) features which are not shared by the Anatolian and Iraqi branches of the *qaltu* dialects.

<sup>62</sup> There is evidence for an analogous use in the Christian Baghdadi dialect (Blanc 1964: 125ff.), the Jewish dialect of Hīt (Khan 1997: 93), and in Bahraini Arabic (Holes 2016: 224, n. 27).

area (Aleppo, Mosul, Baghdad), analytic nominal attribution is rare to completely absent. In the ‘bedouin’ dialects it is infrequently used (Behnstedt 2000: 453) and the same is true for most Anatolian dialects, in which it is used mainly to avoid the repetition of the noun (Jastrow 1978: 125ff.) or to specify measures or materials (Wittrich 2001: 149ff.). Cilician and Antioch Arabic stand out in having developed no genitive particle at all.<sup>63</sup> The situation as found in the dialects of the Northern Fertile Crescent validates Eksell’s statements (2006b: 84) that (1) abundant use of the analytic genitive is predominantly an urban phenomenon and (2) in dialects on the periphery it is either very rare or very frequent. The latter is true only for some remote Anatolian dialects (e.g. Daragözü and Hasköy), where analytical nominal attribution can be regarded as the default case (Jastrow 1978: 126; Talay 2001: 79).

#### 9.3.2.3.4 Verbal modifiers

As in many other dialects of Arabic, a set of verbal modifiers has developed in the dialects of the region, particularly in the ‘sedentary’ dialects.<sup>64</sup> These modifiers express the durative, habitual, perfective, and progressive aspects, as well as the future tense. On the one hand, there is significant variation, even within dialects of the same group. On the other hand, identical words and forms have independently developed by grammaticalization into modifiers in different dialects.

9.3.2.3.4.1 *Indicative* Verbs expressing the habitual, iterative, or general present are unmarked in the region except in those ‘sedentary’ dialects which belong to group 1, where they usually show the prefix *b-*.<sup>65</sup> The same prefix is used in some varieties of the Kōsa subgroup of Anatolian Arabic.<sup>66</sup>

9.3.2.3.4.2 *Progressive* In most Iraqi and ‘bedouin’ dialects forms originating from the active participle *qāʿid* ‘sitting’ express the progressive. The modifier is always invariable and shows different types and stages of phonological reduction: e.g. unchanged *qēʿad* and *ḡāʿid* among the Khawetna and the Syrian Shāwi, *ḡaʿad* in the Harran-Urfa region, *qa-* in Mosul and Baghdad (Talay 1999: 82; Behnstedt 2000: 443; Procházka 2003: 83; Jastrow 1979: 47; Blanc 1964: 115 (Baghdad, only Jews and Christians)). The Anatolian dialects except Mardin are characterized by the modifier *kū-*, which can probably be traced back to a demonstrative element (see §9.3.2.2.3). All dialects of the Syrian group (including the ‘bedouin’ dialects of Hatay) exhibit forms going back to *ʿammāl* ‘working’, that is often shortened to *ʿam-* or *ma-*, cf. Arnold 1998: 116, 199 (Hatay); Procházka 2002a: 113ff. (Cilicia). See also Lentin, this volume, §7.10.2. In a few ‘bedouin’ dialects of Hatay, *wa-* followed by a participle is used (*wa-čātib* ‘he is writing’, Arnold 1998: 200), which is an elliptic circumstantial (*hāl*) clause. Examples:

<sup>63</sup> For other devices of analytical attribution in these dialects see §9.3.3.1.

<sup>64</sup> An exception is the dialect of the Khawetna—probably because of ‘bedouin’ influence (Talay 1999: 178).

<sup>65</sup> Hatay: Arnold 1998: 115; Cilicia: Procházka 2002a: 114; for details and origin see Lentin, this volume, §7.10.1; Owens’s chapter, this volume.

<sup>66</sup> Jastrow 1978: 300: *bā-nqūl* ‘we say’. Jastrow denies any influence from the analogous modifier that is found in Syrian Arabic.

- (18) Harran-Urfa (own data)  
*ğaʕad aʃrab*  
 modifier 1sng-drink.p-stem  
 ‘I am drinking.’
- (19) Mosul (own data)  
*ən-nəswān qa-yəxbəz-ūn xəbəz*  
 def-women modifier-3-bake.p-stem-pl bread  
 ‘The women are baking bread.’
- (20) Anatolia (Jastrow 1999: 46)  
*ku-təqʃaʕ-ūn ʃiyād-ana kwā*  
 modifier-2-see.p-stem-pl hunter-copula.1sng presentative  
*t-tāžīye maʕ-i*  
 def-greyhound with-1sng  
 ‘You (pl) see that I am a hunter, having a greyhound with me.’

9.3.2.3.4.3 *Perfective* In Syrian and ‘bedouin’ dialects the perfective is usually expressed by a participle, but group 3a dialects have developed their own marker, which is used with an s-stem verb. In Mosul it is indicated by the invariable proclitic *kən-*, in the Anatolian dialects different forms are used, among them *kə-*, *kəl-*, *kū-*, and *kūt-*.<sup>67</sup> All these modifiers are most likely derived from *kān/ ykūn*, but the exact etymology of the forms ending in *-l* and *-t* remains uncertain.

- (21) Mosul (Jastrow 1979: 72/34)  
*w-nəḥna kən-ʕağān-na l-ʕağīn w*  
 and-1pl modifier-knead.s-stem-1pl def-dough and  
*ḥaddağ-nā-nu*  
 prepare.s-stem-1pl-3msg  
 ‘And we have already kneaded the dough and prepared it.’

9.3.2.3.4.4 *Future* The markers for the future tense reflect very different linguistic developments because they go back to various kinds of words and usually exhibit irregular phonological reductions. The distribution of these modifiers is clearly geographical, which may indicate a relatively late development of this temporal category.<sup>68</sup> In Iraq and along the Euphrates reflexes of the participle *rāyih* ‘going’ are used. In Anatolia the future tense is indicated by modifiers going back to the conjunction *hattā* ‘so that, in order that’. And in all Syrian dialects (including that of the bedouin of Hatay) one finds shortened reflexes of the phrase *bi-wudd* followed by a pronominal suffix literally meaning ‘in my/your etc. wish’. In the ‘bedouin’ dialects the future is usually expressed by the verb ‘to want’, i.e. *yriḍ*.

<sup>67</sup> For instance, *əl-habwe kūṭ-saddət qaddām əš-šəbēbik* ‘The snow has blocked the windows.’ (Jastrow 1999: 50; see also Jastrow 1978: 307).

<sup>68</sup> For the following see Blanc 1964: 117; Jastrow 1978: 302–4; Arnold 1998: 117, 200; Procházka 2002a: 115.

### 9.3.2.4 Lexicon

In most ‘sedentary’ dialects the root *ḡ-s-l* ‘to wash’ is reflected as *x-s-l*. In Cilicia and Hatay the verb for ‘to ask’ is *sahal* (OA *saʿal*), in some Shāwī dialects *saʿal* is found.

## 9.3.3 SUBSTRATUM AND ADSTRATUM INFLUENCES

### 9.3.3.1 Aramaic

Varieties of Aramaic were undoubtedly the most widely spoken languages in the region at the time of the Arab conquest in the seventh century. Arabic and Aramaic had already been in contact for around a millennium, which explains the many Aramaic loans attested in the earliest layers of Arabic. A significant degree of bilingualism was very likely characteristic of many societies in the region during the centuries after the conquest and has survived up to the present day in parts of Northern Iraq and South-eastern Anatolia (see Map 9.1). Such a linguistic setting would presumably result in numerous contact phenomena and substratum influence, which has been proved for the lexicon, particularly in domains like agriculture and everyday domestic life (Retsö 2006: 181; cf. Holes, this volume, §5.1.1). Influences on other layers are more difficult to determine because the structural similarities between the two languages often make independent parallel development an equally convincing explanation.<sup>69</sup> In the following we present five features that are prominent in many dialects of the region, and which in previous studies have been attributed to the Aramaic substratum. The list contains one phonological, one morphological, and three syntactic phenomena.

In most dialects along the coast from Cilicia to Beirut not only /i/ and /u/, but also unstressed short /a/ in open syllables are elided (cf. Behnstedt 1997a: map 78 for details). This phenomenon is also attested in Anatolia but less consistently applied (Talay 2013: 347). Because Aramaic exhibits exactly the same phonetic rule, an influence is likely, although analogy with the treatment of other short vowels cannot be excluded (Diem 1979: 47; Arnold and Behnstedt 1993: 69; Weninger 2011a: 748).

As mentioned in §9.3.2.2.1, Syrian and Anatolian dialects exhibit 2pl and 3pl pronouns which have *-n* where other Arabic dialects have *-m*. On the surface these seem to be reflexes of the OA *f* pronouns, the generalization of which is, however, unlikely. Since the corresponding pronouns in Aramaic likewise show *-n*, substratum influence has been suggested. The main argument against Aramaic influence is that scattered examples of *n*-pronouns are attested in a few Sudanese and Yemeni dialects, for which an intra-Arabic development must be assumed, as Aramaic substrate is precluded. In spite of this, Behnstedt (1991b) and Arnold and Behnstedt (1993: 75–9), contra Diem (1979: 44), argued in favour of the substratum theory for Syro-Lebanese dialects presenting many forms that can hardly be explained otherwise, in

<sup>69</sup> Good overviews of the still ongoing debate are Weninger 2011a; Río Sánchez 2013; Contini 1999; Talay 2013; Diem 1979.



particular 3mpl ending in *-n*, such as Cilician *hinnin*, which exactly mirrors Aramaic *hinnen*. Owens (2006: 244–5) is sceptical but concedes that the forms found in the dialects of the Fertile Crescent may have developed independently of the Sudanese and Yemeni pronouns. Some scholars have suggested Aramaic influence for the *h*-less pronominal suffixes as well (Arnold and Behnstedt 1993: 79).

In all ‘sedentary’ dialects outside Anatolia<sup>70</sup> an anticipatory pronoun followed by a reflex of the preposition *li-* (or *‘alā*) is used to mark definite direct objects. The frequency of this construction, as well as the factors that restrict its usage, show great diversity; but in all dialects where it is found, it seems to be especially common with objects denoting human beings. Thus its usage fits the tendency found in many other languages to mark strongly individuated and/or animate direct objects (Contini 1999: 106). In-depth studies on the subject are still lacking, but the construction is very frequent in Cilician and Hatay Arabic as well as in Mosul and in (former) Jewish Baghdadi. It is rarer in the dominant Muslim dialect of that city, but attested in Baghdadi poetry of the fourteenth century (Levin 1987: 37).

- (22) Cilicia (Procházka 2002a: 158)  
*il-lēli šif-t-a la-Fātma*  
 today see.s-stem-1sng-3fsng to-Fatima  
 ‘Today (sic!) I saw Fatima.’
- (23) Mosul (own data)  
*‘mbēḥa qšə-tū-nu l-abū-yi*  
 yesterday see.s-stem-1sng-3msng to-father-1sng  
 ‘Yesterday I saw my father.’
- (24) Baghdad Muslims (Blanc 1964: 128)  
*bā‘-a lə-l-bēt*  
 sell.s-stem-3msng-3msng to-def-house  
 ‘He sold the house.’

The origin of this construction, which is absent in OA, has been generally attributed to Aramaic<sup>71</sup> because it has a striking parallel in that language and was particularly common in its later eastern varieties (Rubin 2005: 94–104).<sup>72</sup>

- (25) Syriac (Rubin 2005: 100)  
*bnā-y l-bayt-ā*  
 s-stem.build-3msng-3msng to-house-def  
 ‘He built the house.’

Structurally similar is a construction used for nominal attribution in the Iraqi *qəltu* dialects, in Western Syria, and in Cilicia and Hatay. In the latter two regions it is the

<sup>70</sup> The only exception is the former Jewish dialect of Siverek, north of Urfa, which, however, shows several traits of Iraqi and Syrian dialects (Nevo 1999: 75).

<sup>71</sup> Among the many studies are Contini 1999: 105; Blanc 1964: 130; Weninger 2011a: 750.

<sup>72</sup> Lentin (this volume, §7.16.12) discusses this and similar constructions in detail and questions their Aramaic origin.

only means of expressing a periphrastic genitive, since both dialects lack a genitive exponent (see §9.3.2.3.3).

- (26) Mosul (Jastrow 1979: 49)  
*šakl-u*                      *l-əl-walad*  
 appearance-3msng to-def-boy  
 ‘the boy’s appearance’

Practically all known examples suggest that the usage of this construction is limited to inalienable possessions, particularly kinship. An identical construction is attested for Aramaic in addition to a similar but more frequent one using *d/zy* instead of the preposition *l* (Hopkins 1997: 26ff).

- (27) Syriac (Hopkins 1997: 29)  
*šm-ēh*                      *l-gabr-ā*  
 name-3msng to-man-def  
 ‘the name of the man’

Although the preposition *li-* is widely attested for periphrasis of a genitive in OA, the anticipatory pronoun, the area of its distribution, and its restriction to human beings indicate Aramaic substratum influence.

A final example of possible Aramaic influence is the preposition *fī*, which, with a pronominal suffix, is used to express capability in the dialects of Cilicia, Hatay, and Cyprus (as well as in other Syrian dialects).

- (28) Cilicia (Procházka 2002a: 156)  
*fī.t-ni*      *b-sawwi*                      *haš-šigil*  
 in-1sng modifier-1sng-do.p-stem dem-def-work  
 ‘I am able to do this job.’

As was pointed out by Borg (2004: 52), this usage of the preposition seems to be a calque of Aramaic *ʾūt b-* ‘there is in/ be able’ that occurs also in modern Aramaic dialects.

Significant arguments can be made against Aramaic influence for all the features mentioned;<sup>73</sup> however, the concentrated distribution of linguistic phenomena which lack exact parallels in both OA and other dialects in exactly the region where Arabic–Aramaic bilingualism was/is a fact, supports the substratum hypothesis. It is worth mentioning that the dialects of Cilicia and Hatay are those with the highest number of Aramaic traits. Their complete absence from ‘bedouin’ dialects is easily explained by the fact that these entered the region when Aramaic was in decline and there was little bilingualism between Aramaic speakers and the ancestors of today’s Shāwi ‘bedouin’ speakers. The most puzzling issue is that the closely related Iraqi and Anatolian dialects lack one prominent Aramaic trait each. None of the Iraqi dialects has the *n*-variant pronouns; and the Anatolian dialects lack all three syntactical phenomena just treated. The simplest explanation is that even adjacent dialects do

<sup>73</sup> Other features for which Aramaic influence has been suggested are discussed by Lentin, (this volume, §§7.5.2, 7.16.2–11).

not necessarily conform in all features taken from a substratum language. A possible scenario concerning pronouns is that hypothetically existing north Iraqi *n*-variants have reverted back to the *m*-variants under the influence of other Iraqi dialects, in particular the prestige dialect of Baghdad. Such a development is illustrated by the current tendency of Mosul Arabic to replace the idiosyncratic 3rd-person pronouns presented in §9.3.2.2.1 by the more common forms *huwwe*, *hiyye*, etc. A possible explanation for the lack of Aramaic influence on syntax in Anatolia is that the Arabs who settled there in early Islamic times were mostly pastoralists or garrison troops and therefore more isolated from the local population than their equivalent in Iraq and Syria. This would mean that there was less bilingualism, which is a key factor for syntactic influence. The fact that later this situation changed, and that in some parts of Anatolia bilingualism exists up to the present, does not invalidate this hypothesis because both ‘*l*-constructions’ are practically absent from the Neo-Aramaic dialects spoken in the region.

### 9.3.3.2 Turkish and Kurdish

Owing to the reasons described in §9.1, the strongest foreign linguistic impact on the Arabic spoken within Turkey today is that of Turkish. On the whole, the influence of both adstratum languages, Turkish and Kurdish, is restricted to phonology and lexicon. In spite of the fact that in Anatolia and Northern Iraq contact with Kurdish was much more intensive over the centuries, its linguistic impact has been weaker than that of Turkish. Though it is another important language of the region, Armenian has also left very few traces in the local Arabic dialects.

The adoption of new consonantal phonemes can be observed, particularly *č* and *g*,<sup>74</sup> to a lesser extent *p*, *v*, and *ž* (the latter mostly in Kurdish loans). In most of the region the word for ‘brush’ is *firča/firčāye* (Turkish *fırça*) and ‘sack’ is *čwāl* (Turkish *çuval*) (Behnstedt 1997a: maps 23 and 25), while these words are usually pronounced with *š* instead of *č* in most Syrian dialects.<sup>75</sup>

Morphologically most Arabic dialects spoken in Turkey use ‘compound verbs’ consisting of ‘to do’ followed by a foreign or Arabic noun. This kind of verb formation is very common in both Turkish and Kurdish (and Persian).<sup>76</sup>

- (29) Tillo (Lahdo 2010: 198)  
       *lā tsayy maraq*  
       neg 2msng-make.p-stem worry  
       ‘Don’t worry!’

In some Anatolian and north Iraqi dialects reflexes of *ayš ʔawr* ‘which condition?’ are found, often contaminated with the original interrogative *kayf* ‘how?’,

<sup>74</sup> This is only true for the ‘sedentary’ dialects because both sounds are integral to the phonemic inventory of the ‘bedouin’-type dialects.

<sup>75</sup> For details and more examples cf. Talay 2006–7: 180ff.; Lahdo 2010: 191; Sabuni 1980: 205–10 (lists all words with *č/g* in Aleppo); Procházka 2002a: 185.

<sup>76</sup> For many examples cf. Talay 2006: 184.

e.g. Diyarbakır *aštōr*, Bəhżāni *aštōf* (< \**ayš ʔawr / kayf*). Although *ʔawr* is originally an Arabic word, it is likely that these forms are calques of Kurdish *çitewr* (Jastrow 1978: 119) as is the case with Mardin *ayččax* ‘when?’ (Kurdish *çax* < Arabic *waqt* ‘time’, Jastrow 1978: 121).

Among other traits of Kurdish and Turkish influence on word formation are the use of the Kurdish diminutive suffix *-əke* in Anatolia (Talay 2006: 185) and the productive use of the Turkish suffixes *-li*, *-lik*, *-siz*, and *-çi* in Iraq (Masliyah 1996). Expressing superlatives with the Turkish particle *en* plus the base form of the adjective is attested for most Arabic dialects in Turkey.

- (30) Cilicia (Procházka 2002a: 202)  
*hāda l-bayt en ʿatīq bi-Ādni*  
 dem def-house superlative particle old in-Adana  
 ‘This is the oldest house in Adana.’

A salient syntactic feature of all Anatolian ‘sedentary’ dialects which has probably developed under the influence of Kurdish and Turkish (and perhaps Aramaic) is the consistent use of a copula in verbless clauses. Etymologically the copula consists of enclitic variants of the personal pronoun and is usually attached to the predicate.<sup>77</sup>

- (31) Mardin (Grigore 2007: 289)  
*mērdīn fōq əğ-ğabal-ye*  
 Mardin on def-mountain-copula.3fsng  
 ‘Mardin is on a mountain (top).’
- (32) Mhallamiye (Sasse 1971: 118)  
*ana mən blād mērdīn-ana*  
 1sng from country Mardin-copula.1sng  
 ‘I am from the district of Mardin.’

A possible Turkish influence on Cilician and Harran-Urfa Arabic is the use of the active participle to express evidentiality. In both dialects this usage is frequently found in propositions which a speaker wants to mark as second-hand information. This parallels the Turkish evidential (the *miş*-perfect) which is obligatory when one reports any kind of event known from hearsay only. In the following example the speaker talks about her friend who claimed to have been reborn and narrated what had happened to her in the hereafter.

- (33) Cilicia (Procházka 2002a: 201)  
*šāyif-t-u la-š-šayx ʾmḥammad... ʿexd-īn-a l-ʾmlyākāt*  
 see.ap.fsng-3msng to-def-sheikh Muhammad take.ap.pl-3fsng def-angels  
 ‘She saw Sheikh Muhammad, the angels took her.’

All dialects of the region have hundreds of Turkish loanwords that entered their lexicon during the four centuries of Ottoman rule, most of them in domains such as food and cooking, tools, administration, and the military. Kurdish loans are mainly

<sup>77</sup> The complete paradigms of three dialects are given in Jastrow 2006a: 91.

restricted to the Anatolian and North Iraqi dialects. In the dialects spoken within Turkey, intra-Arabic lexical development has more or less ceased. Expressions for new concepts or technical achievements are exclusively taken from Turkish, which has significantly diminished the domains in which Arabic is used (cf. Procházka 1999).

### 9.3.4 INTRA-ARABIC CONTACT

#### 9.3.4.1 Influence of ‘bedouin’ dialects on ‘sedentary’ dialects and *vice versa*

Map 9.2 shows that the ‘bedouin’ dialects protrude like a big wedge between the Syrian and Mesopotamian ‘sedentary’ dialects. For many centuries up to the creation of nation states after World War II, the bedouin were socially, economically, and militarily dominant in this area. Therefore, it is not surprising that in contact situations speakers of ‘sedentary’ dialects adopted linguistic features from the more prestigious ‘bedouin’. A special case is Baghdad, where the ‘sedentary’ dialect of the Muslim population was gradually bedouinized owing to massive migration from the countryside to the city (Palva 2009; Holes 2007b: 130–3). There is also substantial ‘bedouin’ influence on the dialects of the scattered urban settlements along the Euphrates, for instance in the Iraqi town of Hīt, whose ‘[Jewish] dialect has been extensively bedouinized’ (Khan 1997: 94; Khan, this volume).

The influence is most striking in the lexicon and phonologically, a particularly prominent feature being the adoption of the characteristic ‘bedouin’ sounds *g* and *č*, which first entered the ‘sedentary’ dialects via loans typical of bedouin lifestyle—e.g. *nāga* ‘she-camel’ and *gargūra* ‘one-year-old lamb’. These sounds then affected other elements of the vocabulary, such as *ʔačal* ‘to eat’, *čam* ‘how many?’, and *čabīr* ‘big’. The last example shows that the linguistic impact of the bedouin has sometimes resulted in hybrid forms that do not actually exist in either of the two contributing dialects: *čabīr* is a fusion of ‘sedentary’ *kabīr* with ‘bedouin’ *čibīr*.

A significant number of ‘bedouin’ lexical items are in the core vocabulary of ‘sedentary’ dialects that have been in close contact with the bedouin, including *zōd* ‘also’, *ʔitum* ‘mouth’, *zēn* ‘good’, *ʔinṭa* ‘to give’,<sup>78</sup> and *gāc* ‘earth, soil’, cf. Behnstedt 1997a: maps 308, 315, 351, 363; Talay 1999: 30.

Influence of local ‘sedentary’ on ‘bedouin’ dialects is rare. Talay (1999: 32) reports that young people of the northern Khawetna have adopted linguistic features of the urban dialects of al-Ḥasaka and Qāmišli, rather than ‘bedouin’ features. The speech of the small, relatively isolated, group of former bedouin in Antioch exhibits several traits of ‘sedentary’ influence, for instance the future marker *bidd-* and the verbal modifier *ʕam-* for the progressive (Arnold 1998: 27–9; 199).

<sup>78</sup> In the region treated here, the forms *anṭa* / *yinṭi* (instead of the common *ačṭa* / *yīčṭi*) can be regarded as a typical ‘bedouin’ feature. Diachronically seen, this may not always have been the case. The variant *anṭa* / *yinṭi* has been attested in Arabic sources since the thirteenth century and is also found in Central Asian Arabic and the ‘sedentary’ Bahraini dialects (for an overview see map 376a in WAD III: 405). Holes (2016: 13) traces this form back to Aramaic *natan* and Akkadian *nadānu*, others explain it as the result of a dissimilation process: *anṭa* < \**aṭṭa* < *ačṭa* (WAD III: 409).

### 9.3.4.2 Spread of so-called prestige dialects

During the past few decades, the urban dialect of the Syrian capital Damascus has gained significant prestige and is understood by most inhabitants of the country. There are several reasons for the spread of a 'Syrian *koiné*', but the media, which reach all layers of Syrian society, including even remote villages, constitute the most important. This linguistic levelling has not yet resulted in the complete abandonment of local dialects. Mainly affected are certain segments of the lexicon, but prominent features of phonology and morphology have also been influenced. Isaksson and Lahdo (2002: 311) report a 'strong influx of a more prestigious central Syrian tongue' for several smaller towns situated near the Turkish border. In the dialect of the Khawetna, *šū* is often used instead of *škūn* 'what?' besides other typical Syrian features such as the two verbal prefixes *b-* and *'am-* as indicative and progressive markers respectively (Talay 1999: 62, 179, 182). In the dialect of Dēr iz-Zōr the vowel of the imperative is lengthened—a feature originally absent from other dialects of that region, e.g. *šrāb!* 'drink!', *q<sup>c</sup>ōd!* 'sit down!' (Jastrow 1978: 80). Recently published texts (e.g. Behnstedt 2000) exhibit many such instances of dialect levelling, even in the speech of the bedouin.

Because of the political instability in Iraq, we have little up-to-date linguistic information about the country. Since Mosul is a very large city, its dialect has not been much affected by Baghdadi Arabic, although younger speakers tend to avoid certain features which may be perceived as 'strange' by other Iraqis, among them the aforementioned 3rd-person personal pronouns or lexical items such as *qāšā<sup>c</sup>* 'to see'.

In Turkey there is no supra-regional prestige dialect to which speakers accommodate themselves, though the dialects of larger towns, in particular Antakya in Hatay (Arnold 1998: 25) and Mardin in south-eastern Anatolia, have a certain influence on the rural varieties spoken in their vicinities. The more than a million Syrian refugees who have fled their country since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011 may well be having an impact on the local Arabic dialects in areas close to the border.

## 9.3.5 EXTRA-LINGUISTIC VARIABLES

### 9.3.5.1 Geography and economy

Geographical conditions undoubtedly influence language development. Since pre-Islamic times the plains between the Euphrates and the Taurus Mountains have attracted nomads from Arabia and thus are still today dominated by 'bedouin'-type dialects. The role of geography is particularly obvious along the northern edges of the plain. For instance, the dialects of the Mardin group which are spoken in the villages in the plain below the town exhibit a significantly stronger influence of 'bedouin' dialects than those of the mountainous hinterlands (Jastrow 1978: 30). Further south, typologically older 'sedentary' dialects prevail against the 'bedouin' dialects only in some larger towns along the Euphrates. This was also probably due to the fact that they are situated along the main trade route between Syria and Mesopotamia, which resulted in steady contact with speakers of dialects of those two regions. Another good example of the importance of communication lines is the high degree of

coherence among the urban dialects along the Tigris that share characteristic isoglosses such as the  $r > \dot{g}$  shift.

On the north-western fringe of the Fertile Crescent we find another good example of geographical influence on linguistic patterns. The ‘Alawī dialects spoken in the flat Cilician Plain are extremely homogeneous; but those in the hilly Hatay show significantly more internal variation.

### 9.3.5.2 Religion

Another important factor in language development and variation is religion. Christians, Jews, and ‘Alawīs alike have always been much less influenced by MSA than Sunnīs, which means that their dialects more often exhibit lexical or syntactical peculiarities. Communal endogamy is still strictly observed even in mixed towns or villages—a factor that reinforces linguistic variation. Religious affiliation can also impede the shift to a region’s majority language. In Iraqi Kurdistan the Jews were the only autochthonous Arabic speakers (Jastrow 1990b: 4); and in and around Diyarbakır Arabic was spoken only by Jews and Christians (Jastrow 2006a: 87). Isolated Sunnī Arab communities tend to conform more easily to the majority language: north of Urfa are several formerly Arabic-speaking tribes who switched to Kurdish, and the same is true for a subgroup of the famous Ṭayy, who live in the Turkish town of Silopi (Talay 2008: 439). A possible case where change of religion triggered change of language happened in the sixteenth century when the Aramaic-speaking Mḥallamiyye, who live east of Mardin, embraced Islam and subsequently switched to Arabic.<sup>79</sup>

In many towns of the region religious division, intra-group marriage, and group-specific town quarters have resulted in communal dialects. The dialects spoken by Muslims, Christians, and Jews are generally mutually comprehensible but often differ in several respects. The degree of deviation varies significantly from town to town. The Christian, Jewish, and Muslim dialects of Mosul, for instance, were quite similar (Jastrow 1989a: 290), whereas in Baghdad the first two differed markedly from the dominant Muslim dialect which, as was mentioned, has undergone significant change owing to bedouinization (Palva 2009). On the whole, Jewish dialects were more prone than Christian dialects to diverge from Muslim dialects. On the other hand, the Jewish dialects often showed influences from other towns and regions which most likely were the result of their trade networks and supra-regional contacts with co-religionists. The Jewish dialect of Siverek near Urfa exhibits several features that are clearly derived from Iraqi and Syrian dialects (Nevo 1999: 82). The dialects of the Jews of Iskenderun and Antakya show salient traits of Aleppo Arabic, otherwise not found in any dialect of Hatay. Among these features are the shift  $q > ?$ , monophthongization of  $ay$  and  $aw$ , and the typical Syrian interrogative  $\dot{s}ū$  (Arnold 1998: 15–17).

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Jastrow 2004a: 99; Kern 2015; Benninghaus (2002: 179ff.), who advises caution in accepting these narratives.

## 9.4 CONCLUSIONS

Haim Blanc stated that ‘the *qeltu*-dialects are akin to the oasis dialects described by Cantineau [i.e. Palmyra, Soukhne] and to the ‘sedentary’ dialects of the Aleppo region’ (1964: 6). His idea was adopted by Alexander Borg, who maintained that ‘the occurrence in Cypriot Arabic of dialectal traits currently attested across a broad dialectal region on the mainland is plausibly ascribable to the existence of an erstwhile *koine* radiating from the region of northern Syria and south eastern Anatolia’ (2004: 31). Although some of the eighteen features Borg cited to corroborate his hypothesis (2004: 28–32) are inaccurate, there is no doubt that the ‘sedentary’ dialects of our region do share numerous characteristics which suggest a common origin (Talay 2014). These include both inherited features and innovations: the *imāla* of *ā*, the frequent use of attributive phrases with the noun-def-adjective structure, the shift from *a* to *i* in closed pre-tonic syllables, the *h*-less pronominal suffixes, the presentatives with initial *k*-, and the use of independent pronouns to mark a second direct object. To this list one can add the shift from *ġ* to *x* in the root *x-s-l* ‘to wash’; and the occurrence of the preposition *xalf* ‘behind’ in contrast to the reflexes of *warāʿa* common in most other Arabic dialects (Procházka 1993: 137). As was suggested in §9.1, these features most likely emerged before the eleventh century.

There are many other fields showing parallel, but independent, innovation, which indicates that these developments happened in later times and were regionally more restricted. Among these are the different genitive particles, aspect markers, interrogatives, and adverbs.

There are clear hints that the absence of any influence of CLA/MSA on the northern periphery resulted in both the preservation (e.g. dialectal *tanwīn*) and the generalization of old features. Among the latter is the default use of noun-def-adjective phrases along the whole northern edge of the Fertile Crescent and the very frequent marking of direct objects in Cilicia. Taken as a whole, the dialects on the periphery show less deviation than has often been assumed.<sup>80</sup> Their ‘exotic’ character is mainly due to their many Turkish and Kurdish loanwords, which affect only the surface structure of the dialects. Only a few dialects in Anatolia (Sason-Muş region), whose speakers have had no contact with other Arabs and been Arabic-Kurdish bilinguals for centuries, exhibit such radical changes as loss of emphatic consonants, absence of asyndetic noun attribution, or the alignment of definiteness patterns with Kurdish models (Akkuş forthcoming).

With the exception of some parts of Iraq and a few towns in north-eastern Syria where both ‘sedentary’ and ‘bedouin’ Arabic dialects are in close contact, the ‘bedouin’ dialects have followed their own way. The main reason for the close similarity of most ‘bedouin’-type dialects in Syria and Iraq is doubtless the mobility of their speakers, which has fostered linguistic convergence over many centuries. The penetration of tribes from the Arabian Peninsula is a continuous factor in the history of the region

<sup>80</sup> For details see Procházka 2006–7: 115–17.



from antiquity to the twentieth century. The vast area dominated by the bedouin suggests little contact between the ‘sedentary’ dialects of Syria and Mesopotamia after the eleventh century. Ottoman Aleppo, as the most important commercial centre of the whole region, may have had a certain unifying influence on the dialects along the trade routes to Iraq and Anatolia and may have facilitated the preservation of common features such as the *imāla*. Nevertheless, today there are a great many differences on all levels between group 1 and group 3a dialects, with the latter showing many more archaic features. This can be explained by several factors. During most of the Ottoman era Iraq and south-eastern Anatolia were on the periphery of the Empire and economically rather weak. And there were only a few cities—none of them really large<sup>81</sup>—which could have stimulated linguistic innovation. Syria, however, had a chain of large cities from Adana to Aleppo, Homs, Damascus, and Beirut. The popular pilgrimage route from Istanbul to Mecca connected most of these urban centres and may additionally have fostered linguistic dynamics.

<sup>81</sup> Eighteenth-century Baghdad had only about 15,000 inhabitants.

## Historical and typological approaches to Mauritanian and West Saharan Arabic

CATHERINE TAINE-CHEIKH

Mauritania, like most countries in the Sahel-Saharan region, forms a transitional area between North and sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of climate, ecosystem, and inhabitants.

The traditional lifestyle of the desert inhabitants, which continued well into the twentieth century, has not yet entirely disappeared, despite an accelerating trend towards sedentarization over the past few decades. In some ways, it is reminiscent of the lifestyle of the *bedouin* of the Arabian Peninsula. However, the West African Sahara has long been the homeland of Berber speakers. As far as Niger and, to a large extent, Mali, are concerned, it has remained so, but in the westernmost part of the Sahara, the situation changed radically over the course of the second millennium AD.

Very little is known about the conditions under which Berber speakers switched to Arabic, and almost nothing about the linguistic practices current in the area in past centuries. Nonetheless, based on the linguistic study of the so-called Ḥassāniyya Arabic dialect spoken in the Western Sahara, certain elements of the linguistic history of the region can be suggested. To do this, we will compare the data with data from other Arabic dialects as well as the Berber variety (*Zenāga*) which used to be spoken in Mauritania, but which is virtually extinct today. Moreover, these comparisons will, where possible, take into account the historical, anthropological, and social contexts which can shed light on them. Certainly, a wide range of factors contributed to making Ḥassāniyya what it is today. The Western Sahara, given its peripheral position, was, for several centuries, very isolated from the rest of the Arab world.

The first part of this study will be devoted to the Banī Ḥassān,<sup>1</sup> considered to be the original speakers of Ḥassāniyya. We will examine their history and origins, and various characteristic elements of their language. The second part will treat the situation in the

<sup>1</sup> The form Banī is used in reference to its dialectal pronunciation; the equivalent in CLA is Banū.

Western Sahara before and after the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān, the various phases of Arabization, and the effects of contact with Arabic on the non-Arab populations. We will explore some of the language's original features, including its unitary nature, and the conditions which gave rise to its creation.

### 10.1 ORIGIN(S) AND THE ARAB LEGACY

The language which is most widely known as Ḥassāniyya (or, in Morocco, Ḥassāni) is also called *klām al-bīḍān* or *klām Ḥassān*. Although *klām al-bīḍān* can be understood, in a Mauritanian context, as meaning 'language of the Moors',<sup>2</sup> the label *klām Ḥassān* (even more than Ḥassāniyya and Ḥassāni) makes reference to a specific group, the Banī/Awlad Ḥassān, and to their ancestor Ḥassān, considered the father of the language.

Because this group played a very important role in forming and shaping society in the Western Sahara, specialists in Moorish history and genealogy have paid them a great deal of attention, but very little is known about these regions before their arrival. Here, for example, are the brief comments with which the work by Mokhtar Ould Hamidoun on the Ḥassān tribes begins:<sup>3</sup> 'The Banū Ḥassān are the sons of Ḥassān b. Mukhtār b. Muḥammad b. Maʿqil, ancestor of the Maʿqil Arabs who came from Hijāz and Najd to the Maghreb with the Hilālīs in the fifth century AH [= eleventh c. AD]. They settled near the Muluya until they received a call for help from ʿAlī b. Yiddir, who was leader of Sūs following the Almohad period. They moved closer to him and dominated the Sūs, levying tribute from its inhabitants following wars with these b. Yiddir. They then rebelled against the Marinids, and the [Marinid] sultan Yussuf b. Yaʿqub attacked them in 668 ah [=AD 1269] with a force of 12,000 horsemen. He vanquished them, and that was the reason for the penetration of some of their group into Mauritania, which they reached at the beginning of the eighth century AH [= end of the fourteenth century AD]'. This terse introduction nonetheless provides some avenues which I will now explore in more detail: the Maʿqil Arabs, their migration with the Hilālīs from the eleventh century on, and their Hijāzi and Najdi origins.

#### 10.1.1 THE MAʿQIL ARABS

As far as this group is concerned, most authors refer to the writings of Ibn Khaldūn.<sup>4</sup> This is the case, for example, with Shaykh Muḥammad al-Imām ibn al-Shaykh Māʾ al-ʿAynīn, the Moorish author quoted by Norris in *The Arab Conquest of the Western Sahara*. Here is the passage on the original location of the Banū Maʿqil in Norris's

<sup>2</sup> The expression literally means 'language of the whites', but in Mauritania, it is commonly used for all Arabic speakers who speak Ḥassāniyya (see Taine-Cheikh 1989).

<sup>3</sup> Mokhtar Ould Hamidoun devoted much of his life to documenting the tribes of Mauritania, but most of the works appearing under his name (e.g. Ibn Ḥamidūn 1990) were published posthumously.

<sup>4</sup> Thus all mentions of the name of Maʿqil, in Cuq's collection of Arab sources (1975), refer to pages in the works of Ibn Khaldūn.

translation: 'Ibn Khaldūn has remarked—he being alive in the eighth/fifteenth century—that in his time the Banū Maʿqil were among the most amply provided of the nomad Arabian tribes. Their homeland lay in the deserts of the furthest Maghrib. They were the neighbours of the Banū ʿĀmir ibn Zughbah (Hilālīs) in their tribal haunts to the south of Tilimsān and they extended as far as the Atlantic. They had three clans (*buṭūn*), Dhū ʿUbaydallāh, Dhū Manṣūr and Dhū Ḥassān. The first of these was neighbour to the Banū ʿĀmir and their district lay between Tāwarirt and the Tall and all the district lying to the south. The second group extended from Tāwarirt to the Darʿah and to the Tall which faced it, whilst the third (Ḥassān) were in the territory between the Wādī Darʿah and the Atlantic. Their Shaykhs dwelt in the region of Nūl (the Wād Nūn), the capital of the Sūs. They were the overlords of the furthest Sūs and they pastured in the sandy regions as far as the terrain of the *mulaṭṭamūn*—that is, the Gudālah, Massūfah, and Lamtūnah' (Norris 1986: 19–20).

Although, at that time, the Banī Ḥassān appear to have made up a specific group located farther south than the others, and despite the fact that seven centuries have passed since the era Ibn Khaldūn wrote about, one would expect there might be closely related features shared by Ḥassāniyya and the dialects which can be linked to the presence of the Banī Maʿqil. Indeed, all the work on Moroccan Arabic shows that there are several types of dialect in the country, and that there is a set of features which quite clearly distinguishes the group of 'pre-Hilālī' from the 'post-Hilālī' Arabic dialects. This distinction originates in Marçais 1961, where all bedouins who entered North Africa in the eleventh century are more or less described as Hilālīs.

In the case of Morocco, the distinction between 'Hilālīs' and 'Maʿqilīs' can be fuzzy, but the dialects of the second type are often classified among the specific group of 'Maʿqilī' dialects which cover the western Maghreb and extend widely into Algeria, notably in the district of Oran.<sup>5</sup>

Colin (1986) describes the 'bedouin' dialects as 'dialects of the plains': 'the Atlantic plain, from Arzila to Mogador (modern Essaouira), with extensions into the interior, the Moulouya basin, eastern Moroccan plateau and the Moroccan Sahara region (Oued Ghir, Oued Ziz, etc.)'. Noting that little is known about them, and that they differ from one another, in all likelihood, in the greater or lesser extent of their conservatism, he characterizes them globally as sharing the following features:

- voiced realization [g] of the *qāf*;
- retention of the interdental;
- a short-vowel system with minimal oppositions (lacking *i*), characterized by the insertion of an ultra-short transition vowel with a *u* colouring following *k*, *g*, *h*, and *ġ* (as in *kūbār* 'big', *igūʿed* 'he sits', and *rūġʿāg* 'thin') and certain doubled consonants: *bb*, *ff*, *mm*, *kk*, *gg*, *qq*, and *xx* (as in *luġrubba* 'the crows', *nuffʿāxa* 'bellows', and *sukkʿār* 'sugar');

<sup>5</sup> The study by Marçais (1908) on the dialect of the Saïda Ūlād Brāhīm gives a good example of this type of dialect, which Cantineau (1940) labelled the 'D' dialects'.

- resyllabication owing to stress being maintained on the first syllable (*yəkkətbu* ‘they write’, *bəggərti* ‘my cow’);
- a 3msng pron suffix in *-ah*;
- a genitive particle translating ‘of’, *ntāʿ*, or *tāʿ* (derived from CLA *matāʿ*) which agrees in gender and number with its antecedent noun;
- reduction of the diphthong in the pl inflection of defective verbs (*glū/yeḡlū* ‘fry’, *nsū-yensū* ‘forget’);
- a few specific lexemes such as *bā/ibī* ‘want’, *yāmās* ‘yesterday’, *ḡarwək*, *ḡurk* ‘now’ (cf. CLA *ḡā l-waqt*).

Over the past decades, the pioneering work of Loubignac (1952) on the Zaër, and of Destaing (1937) on the Arabic spoken by the Sūs Chleuhs has been revisited (Aguadé 1998; Moscoso 1999) and complemented by other studies on dialects which have a voiced reflex ([g]) of the *qāf*. Several of these (e.g. dialects spoken in Casablanca, Essaouira, Marrakesh, Settat) are urban, often strongly influenced by pre-Hilālī dialects (Aguadé 2013), but even in the Skūra oasis (Aguadé and Elyaacoubi 1995) and in the Valley of the Draa Oued (Venero 1997), the interdentalals have disappeared. Of all the Moroccan dialects, that spoken by the Zaër is thus alone, alongside Ḥassāniyya, in having retained them.

Other features listed by Colin, while not completely general, are very widespread, such as the existence of two short vowels *ə* and *ū*; but none of these features is found in Ḥassāniyya, with the exception of two temporal adverbs (*yāmās* ‘yesterday’ and *ḡarək* ‘now’).<sup>6</sup> Among other ‘Moroccan’ characteristics absent in Ḥassāniyya, one finds: the passive-reflexive in *tt-* or *t-*; the use of a preverbal particle before the p-stem verb (*kā-* and especially *tā-*); generalization of the form in *-ti* for both genders in the 2sng in the s-stem verb; presence of a post-verbal negative element *-š*. All of these features have been regularly noted in Moroccan dialects which have *g < OA/q/*, despite a few exceptions: thus the Skūra dialect, which has retained the distinction in gender and a few traces of the passive in *n-*, as in Ḥassāniyya.<sup>7</sup>

Of all the Maʿqilī dialects, it is the Zaër ‘bedouin’ dialect that Ḥassāniyya appears to be closest to because of its retention of the interdentalals, but also because of convergences observed in the lexical domain (Taine-Cheikh 1988–98). However, there are many features in the Zaër dialect that are not shared by Ḥassāniyya, e.g.

- the shift of the CLA affricate *ḡ* to *d* in contact with *š*, *s* or *z* (*ʿdūza* ‘old lady’, *dəḡš* ‘donkey foal’);<sup>8</sup>
- lengthening of the short vowel in open syllables before a suffix (*ʿərḡət + u > ʿərḡātu* ‘she recognized him’);

<sup>6</sup> The short vowel system in Ḥassāniyya, with neutralization of the *i/u* distinction, is typically that of the Maghreb ‘bedouin’ dialects (Cohen 1970).

<sup>7</sup> However, in Ḥassāniyya the prefix *n-* is restricted to the passive of the basic form, and is generally combined with a dental stop (*ttən-* or *ttnə-*) in Skūra, where it is used only for the passive-reflexive of the derived verb patterns (Aguadé 1994).

<sup>8</sup> The shift *ḡ > d* is found in Ḥassāniyya in a few lexemes based on three radicals (cf. *dāšra* ‘city’; *ddāššā* ‘burp’; *dšar/dšar* ‘be over familiar, be audacious’). The first two show shifts which happened long ago. The third, apparently more specific to Morocco, may have been borrowed.

- paradigm of the verbs ‘eat’ and ‘take’ (*kla*, *yākūl*, and *xḍa yāxūḍ*);
- the interrogatives *feʿn* ‘where?’, *mnēʿn* ‘from where?’, and *škūn* ‘who?’.

On all of these points, Ḥassāniyya shows divergent forms:

- *ʿzūz* ‘old woman’ (with *z—z* and without the *f* ending);
- *ʿarvət + u > ʿarʿvtu* ‘she knew him’;
- *kāl*, *yāwkāl* ‘eat’, and *xāḍ*, *yāwxāḍ* ‘pass through, go along’;<sup>9</sup>
- *mnāyn* ‘where?’, *mən mnāyn* ‘from where?’, and *mən* ‘who?’.

It is unsurprising that Heath (2002) pays particular attention to ‘Saharan Arabic’<sup>10</sup> in his comprehensive comparative work on Moroccan dialects. Of the lexemes specific to ‘Saharan Arabic’, I would pick out the following: *gdəv* ‘vomit’ (alongside *tbowwaʿ*); *həggiyyā* ‘hiccough’; *uʿa* ‘wake up’; *ʿaddāl* and *wāsā* ‘do’; *ʿa* ‘find’ (alongside *žbar*); *mrag* ‘exit, go out’; *nzəl* and *nəggāz* ‘go down’; *rašsav* ‘jump’; *šabb* ‘pour’; *lāwwād* ‘search for’; *ʿəlbā* ‘nape’; *bāḥšišā* ‘throat’; *dābbūs* ‘wooden stick’; *məznā* ‘cloud’; *kədyā* ‘mountain’; *šlāb* ‘rain’.<sup>11</sup> Given that all of these terms are part of the basic vocabulary, this list confirms the fact that Ḥassāniyya preserves many original features, and invites us to look at dialects other than the Maʿqilī dialects of Morocco in order to find similarities.

#### 10.1.2 A SOJOURN IN THE MAGHREB WHICH LASTED SEVERAL CENTURIES

In the 1940s, linguistic investigations carried out by Jean Cantineau across the various regions of Algeria made it possible to establish several dialect groups, among both ‘sedentary’ and more or less recently Arabized populations, and bedouin of Arabian origin (or who had been Arabized after the arrival of the Hilālīs). Because of their central position in the Maghreb, some dialects spoken in Algeria belong to groups which extend over both sides of the border. I have already mentioned the case of what Cantineau called the ‘D’ dialects, spoken both in western Algeria and in Morocco. One finds a comparable situation in the east of the country, where Cantineau’s group ‘E’ dialects spread well into Tunisia, and even beyond. Lastly, still among the ‘bedouin’ dialects (the majority dialects in Algeria), there are the dialects, spoken by the major nomadic groups of the south, which Cantineau dubbed the ‘A’ dialects. Other studies then specified the limits of various linguistic features, such as that of the forms *yensu* and *tensi* as compared to *yensāw* and *tensāy* (Grand’Henry 1976: 49), thereby redefining the contours of the various groups and giving rise to mixed dialects. This is the case, for example, of the Arabic dialect spoken in Saoura, which Grand’Henry (1979: 227) presents as a ‘DA’ dialect, i.e. ‘a ‘D’

<sup>9</sup> One notes, in contrast, that in both cases the interdental final root-consonant is emphatic (*d > ḍ*).

<sup>10</sup> This label is applied essentially to Ḥassāniyya, to which the dialects of some oases in the south are more or less closely related.

<sup>11</sup> Among the examples excluded are terms found in the oases of the south but not in Ḥassāniyya.

dialect presenting not only the characteristics of Moroccan and Mauritanian dialects, but also slightly influenced by the ‘A’ dialects of the central Sahara.

The dialect spoken in the oases of the south-western Algerian Sahara (Béchar, Abadla, Igli, Beni Abbes) is in effect closely related to those spoken in the south-eastern Moroccan oases (including the loss of interdental consonants). However, with the exception of the preposition ‘*an*’ and the p-stem inflection of the *něktbu* type which indeed shows the same syllable structure as in Ḥassāniyya (contrary to *bgārtēk* ‘your cow’ and *nḍārbēk* ‘I hit you’ which in Mauritania would take the forms *bāg<sup>o</sup>rtāk* and *naḍ<sup>o</sup>rbāk*), convergence with Ḥassāniyya remains quite limited, despite the coexistence of the passive in both *n*- and *t*-.

The differences between Ḥassāniyya and the ‘A’ dialects seem too clear-cut, at least on two points (the passive in *t*- and metatheses of the type *žēzzār* > *zēžzār* ‘plug a gap’ and *žebš* > *zebš* ‘plaster’), for one to think, as suggested by Cantineau (1940: 228) that the territory of the ‘A’ dialects extended all the way into Mauritania. However, beyond retention of interdentals, diphthongs, and the prefix *a*- with pattern IV verbs in *af<sup>o</sup>al*, there are several other important shared features: firstly the *imāla* of the long *ā* in final position (although much weaker than in eastern Maghreb) and secondly the form of the syllable structure when a vowel-initial suffix is added (compare *kāt<sup>o</sup>lto* ‘she killed him’, *yed<sup>o</sup>rsu* ‘they are threshing the wheat’, and *bāg<sup>o</sup>rti* ‘my cow’ to the Ḥassāniyya forms provided).

There are three relatively detailed descriptions of the following dialects: that of the ‘Arbāš (Dhina 1938), of Bou-Saada (Marçais 1945) and, further to the south, of the Mzāb region (Grand’Henry 1976) which did not retain the interdentals (probably owing to influence from Berber speakers’ pronunciation). Other features shared with Ḥassāniyya are:

- the pattern II verbal noun in *tef<sup>o</sup>āl* rather than *tef<sup>o</sup>il*,<sup>12</sup>
- the variant *mfa<sup>o</sup>lā* as pl of the pattern I participle *māf<sup>o</sup>ul* (*l-<sup>o</sup>kbāš msällxa*, pl of *āl-kabš mäsllūx* ‘the ram is skinned’, Marçais 1945: 82),<sup>13</sup>
- pronominal forms expanded with the suffix *-yā* as in the 2fsng *ntiyā/ntiyyā*;
- two short vowels (*a* versus *i~u/ə*) which formally distinguish between the s-stem and the imperative of geminated CaCC verbs as in *ḥass* ‘he smelled’ versus *ḥiss/ḥass* ‘smell!’.<sup>14</sup>

The regular shift from *ġ* to *q* is another feature of the ‘A’ dialects which they share with Ḥassāniyya, but only some speakers (those originating from the areas located to

<sup>12</sup> In Ḥassāniyya, the form *tāf<sup>o</sup>il* is reserved for borrowings from CLA. Compare *tāḥdād* ‘act of sharpening’ with (note the *q* characteristic of borrowings) *tāḥqīq* ‘act of verifying’.

<sup>13</sup> However, this variant does not appear to be restricted to the A dialects and Ḥassāniyya. It has also been noted in the dialects of the Ūlād Brāhim and the Gabès El-Ḥamma.

<sup>14</sup> In contrast, the 2sng gender distinction (following a consonant) which, in Ḥassāniyya, is based on the same vowel distinction (*-āk* vs. *-ək*), is not found in these dialects. Globally speaking, as far as gender distinction in pronouns is concerned, the more conservative Ḥassāniyya is closer to the Maghreb dialects situated further to the east.

the east of a line extending from the north-east of Mauritania to the south-east).<sup>15</sup> I will come back to this typically ‘bedouin’ feature (linked to the *g* pronunciation of the *qāf*), which may be historically significant, even though these Maghreb dialects are not alone in possessing the feature (Cantineau 1936).

If one postulates that loss of the passive pattern in *n*- and its replacement by patterns bearing the prefix *t*-/*tt*- (including pattern I) only recently became widespread in the ‘A’ dialects (or after the fourteenth century, at least),<sup>16</sup> it is conceivable that Ḥassāniyya was, before that date, very similar to the dialects of the main nomadic tribes in Algeria.

It remains, however, to be explained why, instead of metathesis between sibilants and fricatives, characteristic of the ‘A’ (and ‘D’) dialects, Ḥassāniyya tends to show, as in eastern Maghreb dialects, assimilation of fricatives to sibilants, whatever their order within the root. Examples: (CLA Arabic) *sarʒ* ‘saddle’ and *ʒazza* ‘shear’ > (Ḥassāniyya) *särz* and *zäzz*; and > (south Tunisian dialect of the Marāzīg, after Boris 1958) *s<sup>a</sup>raz* and *zez<sup>z</sup>*.<sup>17</sup>

This is all the more troubling as Ḥassāniyya has many traits in common with various Libyan and Tunisian dialects (among others, the expression of the passive and the number of gender oppositions in verbal inflections), but also differs on several points from the two groups of ‘bedouin’ dialects identified by Marçais (1950). First, it shares neither the defective verb forms *mšet* and *tensu* (in Ḥassāniyya: *mšāt* and *tänsāw*), nor the lengthening of the 3fsg ending before suffix (*sallmātu* ‘she abandoned him’). Secondly, it differs from the central Tunisian ‘H’ group (Hilālī) in its passive form, as one might have expected, but also differs from the ‘S’ (Sulaymī) group in the form *-a(h)* taken by the 3msng pronoun suffix in these dialects.

Therefore, once again, one may suppose that some of these features spread after the Banī Ḥassān had left the Maghreb. One can also hypothesize that the various groups (the Ma<sup>c</sup>qilīs, Sulaymīs, and Hilālīs) arrived with relatively distinct dialects, of which today’s dialects have retained traces: e.g. pronunciation of the 3msng pronoun affix as *-ah* or *-u*.<sup>18</sup> Personally, I believe that no hypothesis should be excluded, including one positing—at least for the Banī Ḥassān in particular and probably more broadly for the Banī Ma<sup>c</sup>qil—koineization phenomena during which variation was

<sup>15</sup> Cohen 1963: 36–7 indicates the reverse tendency (*q* > *g*) in south-west Mauritania, among the least educated—a tendency which is manifested in a few words such as *ḡšābā* ‘type of tunic’ and *ḡandīr* ‘candle’ (< *qandīl*), probably borrowed from ‘sedentary’ dialect speakers (cf. *qəššāba* and *qəndīl*, Colin 1993: 1571, 1614). It is interesting to observe that this tendency is also noted in the Sūs and Essauoira for a few words containing both *q* and *r* (Moscoso 1999: 27; 2002: 38), but one must further note that, once again, this tendency is also found in the eastern Arab World.

<sup>16</sup> According to Grand’Henry 1976: 5, the domain of these prestigious dialects, spoken by nomadic tribes who generally kept away from Berber-speaking areas, spread ‘at the time of Turkish domination over Algeria (from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century): at that time displacement of rural and bedouin groups happened very frequently’.

<sup>17</sup> The studies by Pereira (2010: 66–8) and Benkato (2014: 70) confirm the earlier sources on which my article on Libya was based (Taine-Cheikh 1984).

<sup>18</sup> This distinction separates, for example, the dialects of northern Najd from those of the centre (Ingham 1982: 31).



reduced, with the retained features often, although not always, being the most neutral or least novel.

As we saw, the Banī Maʿqil were very numerous in Morocco, but this was not the case when they arrived in Egypt in the eleventh century (Norris 1986: 12): ‘Drawing attention to the fact that the Maʿqil entered the Maghrib with the Banū Hilāl, he [Ibn Khaldūn] emphasizes that their number comprised only a few extended families; less than a couple of hundred souls, hardly more. It was only after their settlement in the remotest part of the Maghreb that they became of any significance.’ Ibn Khaldūn further specifies that they ‘were confronted’ with the Banū Sulaym; they had long ‘been close’ to the Banū Hilāl and ‘settled’ on their territory.

During their sojourn in the Maghreb between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, the Banī Maʿqil thus had many relations with the other bedouin groups. Their dialect was profoundly modified in consequence, not only through contact with the other Hilālī and Sulaymī dialects, but also under the more or less indirect influence of ‘sedentary’ dialect speakers. Beyond the inventory of differences between dialects linked to the two waves of Arabization, there are in fact a certain number of characteristics shared by all of the Maghreb dialects. The generalization of *n-* in the first person (sg and pl) of the *p*-stem, the near total absence of the ending *-n* on the plural of *p*-stem verb forms (Taine-Cheikh 2014a), as well as the derived verb pattern *fʿāl* (as seen in *byāḍ* ‘turn white, blanch’) are undoubtedly among the most remarkable of the morphological features. The lexicon provides further examples, such as the use of *gdām* (instead of *kaʿ(a)b* or ‘*argūb*’) for ‘heel’, *ḥūt* (instead of *samak*) for ‘fish’, ‘*atrūs*’ ‘billy-goat’, *fakrūn* ‘tortoise’, *dašra* ‘village, town’, and *žənwī* ‘knife’ (WAD I: 174–5, 269–70, 337–8, 377–8; WAD II: 34, 128).<sup>19</sup>

One must further note the dominant trend, in the Maghreb, towards the loss of short vowels in open syllables.<sup>20</sup> This indicates above all that contact between speakers of Arabic and those of Berber, which must have been extensive at the time, must not be forgotten.<sup>21</sup> Before coming back to the question of the Berber substrate however, I would like to discuss the presumed origins of the Banī Maʿqil.

### 10.1.3 ANCIENT ORIGINS

As to the origin of the Banī Maʿqil, all agree that they come from the Arabian Peninsula, but two opposing theses are espoused by genealogists, as indicated by Ibn Khaldūn (Norris 1986: 12–13): ‘As for the lineages among the mass of men these are wholly hidden and quite unknown. The genealogists who are amongst the Arabs of

<sup>19</sup> The difficulty is not finding examples of lexemes typically used in the Maghreb, or having a meaning specific to the Maghreb, but finding examples valid for the entire Maghreb, and for nowhere else. If one takes, for example, the case of *akḥal* ‘black’ as an alternative to *aswad*, one realizes that this is a particularity of the western Maghreb, and that it is less common in the east of Algeria and in Tunisia (Taine-Cheikh 1989: 104, n. 8).

<sup>20</sup> Ḥassāniyya shows no trace of this in the form of an ultra-short vowel. On this point, it was more reductionist than the dialects spoken in the eastern Maghreb, and even the Algerian ‘A’ dialects.

<sup>21</sup> Berber also provided Maghreb Arabic with part of its shared lexicon (as is the case, e.g., of *fakrūn* and *žənwī*).

the Banū Hilāl count them among the Hilālī clans. But this is not so. They allege that their lineage comes within the household of the Prophet, going back to Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib. Now that claim is likewise false. It is false because the offspring of Abū Ṭālib and the Hāshimites were not desert folk who wander in search of pasture. The sound explanation is that they are Arabs of the Yemen. Among the Yemenite Arabs there are two specific clans. Each one of them is called Maʿqil.<sup>22</sup>

Ibn Khaldūn adds that, out of these two lineages, the more probable is that of Ḥārīṭ ibn Kaʿb, who descends from Maḍḥij through Rabīʿah. What is interesting in this detail is that it links this group to the uprising of the Baḥraini Carmathians. The defeat of this movement, which Madelung (1978: 690) situates in AH 470/AD 1077–8, is said to be the reason for the arrival of the Maʿqil in Upper Egypt, following the departure of some of the group from the Arabian Peninsula.

Moorish genealogists, who make no mention of relations with the Carmathians, instead prefer the prestigious reference to Jaʿfar, cousin of the Prophet—who died in AH 9/AD 631 at the battle of Muʿta—which is to say, to Hijāzī and Najdī origins. This is not linked to any particular linguistic considerations, but, for Mokhtar Ould Hamidoun, it explains the names of the points of the compass in use in Mauritania, or at least among the Moors in the south-west. Indeed, if one considers the location of Medina, one observes, like him, that in relation to this city, the four terms take on all their meaning: *tāll* (the mountain) is indeed to the north; *šarg* (the direction of the rising sun) is of course to the east, as it is everywhere; *gāblā* (*qibla*) denotes the south, since Medina is to the north of Mecca; and lastly *sāḥal* (the coast) signifies the direction of the sea, which is located to the west of Medina.

Although this hypothesis of a quasi-direct transposition of the geographical landmarks of a given place such as Medina does not solve the question of variation in the names of the cardinal points of the compass among the Moors (Brosset 1928; Taine-Cheikh 1991a), it does nonetheless explain quite simply the choice of the four terms, especially *tāll*, which is not otherwise used by them. As for the use of *gāblā* to refer to the south (and even the south-west or west in some regions of Mauritania), one must note that this is in no way exceptional in the Maghreb.<sup>22</sup> This retention of the meaning ‘in the direction of the south’ can seem surprising at first, but perhaps it is less linked to the actual direction of the *qibla* in the original country than to the polysemy of the word *qibla* in CLA, which associates the direction of Mecca with the south. Whatever the answer, the problems raised by this polysemy have been resolved in Ḥassāniyya by distinguishing two separate roots: QBL for ‘direction of Mecca’ (= *qibla*) and GBL for ‘south’ (= *gāblā*)—an opposition which is also found in the verbs *staqbāl* and *saqbāl*, respectively ‘take the direction of Mecca’ and ‘cause (s’one) to take the direction of Mecca’ versus *stāgbāl* and *sāgbāl* ‘take a southern direction’ and ‘cause (s’one) to take a southern direction’.

It is particularly with reference to these verbs with the prefix *sa-* that some linguists, following the thesis defended by Ibn Khaldūn, consider a direct connection between Ḥassāniyya and ancient Yemen to be proven. Thus Zavadovskij (1981: 11)

<sup>22</sup> Nor even in Chad or in the Sudan (WAD I: 441, map 149).

considers that the retention of the South Arabic causative prefix *s-* (for example, *saḥmar* ‘to make someone blush’) is one of the ‘Himyarisms’ characteristic of the dialect. He does not appear to have been convinced by the arguments of Cohen 1963: 130–2 in favour of purely internal origins through the creation of a new causative-factitive pattern in parallel with the pattern X in *st(ā)-*. However, if there was external influence, it seems less plausible to consider that it is due to contact with South Arabia than that it is due to influence from Berber (a topic to which I will return).

The other evidence put forward by Zavadovskij is just as unconvincing. Concerning the prepositions *ʿan* and *ilā/ilā* (distinct from *al* ‘to, for’), they are indeed productive in Ḥassāniyya (especially *ʿan*), whereas they have more or less completely disappeared from many Maghreb dialects, including that of the Saïda Ūlād Brāhīm (Marçais 1908: 166–9). However, convergence with Middle Eastern dialects (where these prepositions are more productive) is far from total (Procházka 1993: 71–2, 139–63).<sup>23</sup> Zavadovskij should instead have cited the example of *qafā* ‘back’ that Cohen (1963: 220) gives to denote ‘behind’ (*və gvā*... ‘behind the back of...’) which Procházka (1993: 237) relates to various dialects spoken in the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East—although Ḥassāniyya, like North Yemeni dialects (Behnstedt 1987b: 92), also shows spatial use of *urā*. In fact, in the domain of prepositions, the most interesting specificities of Ḥassāniyya are:

- *sābæg* ‘before’, used only in this dialect;
- *kī(f)/kē(f)* ‘like’, also characteristic of Upper Egypt and most Maghreb dialects;
- *ʿāgəb* ‘after’, of which one finds cognates both in some Maghreb ‘bedouin’ dialects (spoken by the Ūlād Brāhīm and Marāzig) and those spoken in Mesopotamia and Arabia (in the Gulf, ʔofār, Daṭīnah, cf. Procházka 1993: 212).

Zavadovskij also mentions the pronunciation [q] for *ḡayn* (*bḡa* > *bqa* ‘he wanted’) as another of the features of the South Arabian tribes. However, a particularity in pronunciation noted for Daṭīnah shows the reverse tendency (Landberg 1901: 485; Cohen 1963: 37), also noted in central and southern Iraq (Rosenhouse 2006: 272). It is rather in various north Arabian dialects of the Middle Euphrates or Najd (Cantineau 1936: 39; Ingham 2008: 327), as well as in some spoken in the Gulf (Holes 2006b: 242; 2007a: 610; 2016: 53–4), that *ḡ* tends to shift to *q*. Given the wide distribution of this feature in nomadic dialects, however, it is not certain that it constitutes a decisive element in the history of Ḥassāniyya.

In fact, there is no set of features that Ḥassāniyya shares with any particular group of eastern dialects. As for those noted, they do not belong to the most salient features serving to distinguish various groups of eastern ‘bedouin’ dialects. For example, Ḥassāniyya did not undergo the palatalization and affrication (whether conditioned or not) of *k* and *g*, and nor does it have an affricated pronunciation of *ḡ*, still less a switch to *y*. It is also unaffected by the effects of the so-called *ghawa*-syndrome, viz. the presence of a guttural consonant (C2 = *x*, *ḡ*, *h*, *ʿ*, *h*) closing an initial syllable

<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, one must take into account the variant (*i*)*läyn* ‘until, up until’ (Taine-Cheikh 2014b: 16) which, in Morocco, is typical of Saharan dialects (Heath 2002: 498).

whose vowel is *a-*, such that C1aC2- > C1C2a- as in *gahwa* > *ghawa* ‘coffee’ (Johnstone 1967: 6) or C1aC2- > C1aC2a- as in *gahawa* (Blanc 1970: 125–7; de Jong 2007). In the morphological domain, there are no endings in *-n*, whether in verbal inflections or as an indefinite marker (‘dialectal *tanwīn*’, see the chapters of Ferrando, Holes, Procházka, this volume).

What one does find, beyond various trends common to ‘bedouin’ dialects such as a tendency to emphatization and strong stress (Rosenhouse 1984: 10, 15), is rather a partial convergence, sometimes with one group of ‘bedouin’ dialects, sometimes with another. This is illustrated by the following comparisons, based on lexemes found in Ḥassāniyya (WAD I: maps 138, 41, 43):

- *məznā* ‘cloud’, not used in the Maghreb, but occurring widely in Arabian dialects;
- *ḥalmā* (without a modifier) ‘earlobe’, not used in the Maghreb, but used in the Sudan, in Egypt, and in various other dialects, such as that of Irbid in Jordan;
- *šdæg* ‘cheek’ (used less in the Maghreb than in the Chad-Sudan region) is found both in Sinai and in Ḥaḍramawt.

Lastly, I will mention two specific cases where lexical convergence extends into grammaticalization processes.

The first example (Taine-Cheikh 2013a) is that of *(a)rāʿi* which, in Ḥassāniyya, is used differently from *(a)rā-*. The latter form serves, as in many Maghreb dialects, to draw attention to an event, as in: *(a)rā-hu žā* ‘I inform (you) that he has come’. The first, by contrast, is a presentative (like Moroccan *hā-*): *(a)rāʿi-h* ‘here he is’; *(a)rāʿi-h žāy* ‘here he comes’. Forms with the ‘*ayn*, not used in the Maghreb outside Ḥassāniyya, have been noted in many eastern dialects, but it is the forms *arʿa/arʿi*, used in the dialects of Negev and north Sinai, to which the *(a)rāʿi* of Ḥassāniyya seems most closely related, both in their forms (for which the origin could be, rather than *\*raʿa* ‘see’, *raʿa* ‘keep, watch over’) and in their use as (pure) presentatives.<sup>24</sup>

The second example (Taine-Cheikh 2011) concerns the two grammaticalized uses of *gām* ‘stand up’ in Ḥassāniyya. The first, *gām* followed by a verb in the p-stem or a participle, means ‘begin to’. The second, *gām* always in the s-stem and coordinated using *u* ‘and’ with another verb in the s-stem, takes on the meaning of ‘then’. In the Maghreb, these inchoative and discoursal uses are found only, it seems, in Tunisia. In the Middle East, both uses are widespread, but the construction often becomes hypotaxic in both cases (Fischer 2002). Among the dialects having retained, at least partially, the use of the coordinator are those of Eastern Arabia (Holes 2001: 442) and those spoken in the Syrian High Jezireh (Bettini 2006). The latter dialect also has, as

<sup>24</sup> Henkin 2010: 134, 141 makes a clear distinction between the uses of ‘presentatives of conversational discourse’ (*arʿ* and *hay*) and ‘evidential presentatives’, susceptible of being used both in discourse and narratives. The latter forms, *ttrā(t)*, *itrī(t)*, based on the same root <sup>2</sup>*t-r* ‘to transmit, pass on’, also have a cognate in Ḥassāniyya: *ātr-u* ‘it seems that, it could be that’. This modal particle, in similar forms like *aṭar*, *aṭarāt*, *ṭari* and with a similar meaning, is common in the Mashreq (Iraq, Arabia, the Gulf) but rarely noted in the Maghreb, where it is used to denote known facts as in ‘it is the case that..., indeed’ among the Marāzīg (see Boris 1958: 4).

in Ḥassāniyya, the verb ‘take’ (intransitively) to convey the meaning of ‘then’. The only difference is that the Syrian verb shows metathesis (*giḏab*) which is absent from Ḥassāniyya (*gbad*), but this is enough to suggest that the hypothesis of parallel development is the most probable.

To conclude this comparison with eastern dialects, which also sheds new light on similarities with Tunisian dialects, one may say that there is convergence in plenty, especially with ‘bedouin’ dialects. However, the similarities do not make it possible to establish any precise genealogical link, even though Ḥassāniyya often appears to be most closely related to dialects having historical ties to Najdī Arabic.<sup>25</sup>

## 10.2 A VERY GRADUAL ARABIZATION

There is no direct ancient evidence of what the dialect of the Banī Ḥassān was like, but, in the absence of proof of any other distinct demographic inflow from Arabia, I will consider (as suggested by the label *klām Ḥassān*) that the dialect from which today’s Ḥassāniyya springs was indeed that spoken by this branch of the Banī Maʿqil in southern Morocco. Even if this dialect showed major variations at the end of the fourteenth century—which is a possibility even though, in my view, not highly likely—it is clear that these were lost over the following centuries, given the dialectal unity found today.

Explaining this homogeneity will be one of the goals of this second section. It is one of the most surprising features of Ḥassāniyya, and it is further necessary to take into account the fact that, despite numerous conservative features, there are also many particularities which can only be innovations. Moreover, I shall note the effects of the substrate and adstrate: contact with non-Arabic languages over centuries has of course left traces, which contribute to the uniqueness of Ḥassāniyya. To do this, I will first turn to the Berber speakers who lived in the Western Sahara before the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān. Their language is now almost extinct, the end point of a process which began many centuries ago.

The switch from Berber to Arabic is the most salient aspect of a much more global process, Arabization. Anthropologists see this as a profound transformation within a given society, attended by changes to the kinship system, the founding myths, reorientation of genealogies and, more generally, the (re)writing of history. Some aspects of this ‘comprehensive’ Arabization happened long before the change in language, although the two are related. The first among them, as least from a chronological standpoint, concerns without doubt the Islamization of West Africa.

<sup>25</sup> As Holes (p.c.) has pointed out, various similarities exist between Ḥassāniyya and the Eastern Arabian dialects: not only the confusion of *q* and *ḡ* (and *ḡ* and *q*) and the use of *aṭar* (see previous note) but also the neutralization of the *i/u* opposition and the widespread use of the *tifʿāl* pattern II verbal noun (though such forms are now in recession in Eastern Arabia). I thank him for these details (which certain historical facts presented earlier may throw light on) and am very appreciative more generally of his very attentive reading of this chapter.

## 10.2.1 THE TAKRŪR BERBERS

Before the arrival of Islam, the prehistory of this region can be divided into several phases, and the border between the nomadic world of oases and a sedentary lifestyle fluctuated depending on changing climatic conditions.<sup>26</sup> For Vernet (1993: 304–7), a specialist in the prehistory of Mauritania, the settlement of the first Berbers in the Tagant was contemporaneous with the end of the agro-pastoral economy which gave rise, in the Neolithic era, to the amazing ‘urban civilization of Tichitt’. The new arrivals left some traces: ‘first, chariot engravings and (rare) copper mounts, tombs and superimposed dwelling structures in the villages, then “Libyco-Berber” and Tifinagh engravings’.

Vernet noted that the rock-painted chariots in the Western Sahara, which almost always (95% of cases) had two wheels and generally (68%) one drawbar, depicted a specific type: ox-drawn chariots designed to transport heavy produce (very common in the Sahara). More recently, Gauthier and Gauthier (2011) compared the incidence of chariot engravings and those of the Libyco-Berber inscriptions and noted that the boundaries of the areas where they are found coincided in the south and east with those of the Berbers. Then, comparing their distribution to that of the three alphabets (Pichler and Le Quellec 2009), they observe that while the chariots were shared by the Atlas and Saharan regions, the former was the domain of the ‘classical’ alphabet, whereas the latter corresponded both with the domain of the ‘transitional’ alphabet and to that of consistent types of construction: crescents, aligned monuments, and monuments topped with a ‘V’ shaped structure.<sup>27</sup>

These ancient cultural differences within Berber-speaking societies coincide quite harmoniously with the distinction between the Berber dialects of the north and those of the south which I have observed on several occasions and which, in terms of the vowel system and retention of laryngeals, makes Zenāga similar not only to Tuareg, but also to Ghadamsi (Cohen and Taine-Cheikh 2000; Taine-Cheikh 2005).

Arab authors describe the populations inhabiting the desert space between the Maghreb and the western Bilād al-Sūdān at the end of the first millennium as ‘Šanhāja’ having no settled dwelling and drawing their sustenance from camels (they had no wheat or any other cereals). They are characterized by the fact that they ‘veil their faces, following one of their customs [and] do not wear a tunic but drape themselves in swathes of cloth.’ In the period described by Al-Ya‘qūbī (d. AH 278/AD 891), it was beyond this region (i.e. Waddān) and more to the east that the ‘population is Muslim, entirely Ibādī’ (Cuoq 1975: 48). In the west, the nerve centre was the town of Ghašt (i.e. Awdaghust, on the current site of Tegdaoust,

<sup>26</sup> This border ‘seems to have been situated, in the last centuries of the first millennium of our era, in the vicinity of the eighteenth parallel, i.e. not far from Nouakchott for the coastal regions, at the southern limits of the western Aouker, to the southern bank of the Aouker from the Hodh more to the east; it may have been more to the north for all the plateaux of Tagant and Assaba.’ (Robert-Chaleix 1986, quoted by Vernet 1993: 375).

<sup>27</sup> The domain of the ‘archaic’ alphabet (characterized by monuments of another type: Haouanet and dolmens) is located in the Maghreb and the Canary Islands.

excavated by medievalist archaeologists).<sup>28</sup> It is described as a ‘prosperous oasis, with (fixed) dwellings’, the king of which, very powerful, was ‘without religion and without religious law’.

The town’s prosperity, and more broadly that of Gajaaga (part of the Ghana ‘Soninke’ empire) began in the eighth century and was linked to the gold trade (Bathily 1989: 172): ‘The wealth of the Ghana-Wagadu in gold stemmed from the role of intermediary played by the country in exchanges between the Sudan on the one hand, and the Sahara and Mediterranean countries on the other.’ Gold was traded for various products and luxury articles (cloth, weapons) from the Mediterranean, and other goods from closer by, also highly precious, such as salt, the extraction of and trade in which appears to have been largely in the hands of the Saharans.<sup>29</sup>

Contact between nomadic Berber-speaking populations and those speaking a variety of Malinke (or Mandinka) was certainly very frequent at the time. It is even likely that the Azer language,<sup>30</sup> which Monteil (1939) recorded from its last speakers in the ancient caravan cities of Mauritania, testifies to these contacts, in which it perhaps functioned as a ‘trade language’. However that may be, Ibn Ḥawqal (d. AD 988/ AH 377)<sup>31</sup> mentions the presence of Ṣanhāja in Awdaghust, alongside that of Berber tribes (such as the Ṣarṭa and Banū Massūfa) living in isolation between Sijilmāsa and Awdaghust, with no contact with urban life, but controlling the road (Cuoq 1975: 73–5).

This trade across the desert, considered since the Classical era as ‘mute’ because ‘peaceful’, as shown by Farias 1974, was not only economic in its effects. It was also an opportunity for Takrūr (the Western Sahara–Sahel zone) to experience more extended relations with merchants of various origins. In the centuries immediately following the Muslim conquest of North Africa, however, Islam does not appear to have penetrated far into the heartland. This situation only changed at the end of the eleventh century, with the emergence of the Almoravid (*al-murābiṭūn*) movement which launched a holy war against miscreants and bad Muslims. This movement had major consequences, as the Almoravids for a time dominated both Morocco and western Algeria, and conquered Andalusia.

Here I will briefly mention the question of the *mulattāmūn* (the ‘veiled ones’), whose name clearly refers to the Ṣanhāja of the Western Sahara, without its being clear where the territories of the ‘seventy tribes’ of which (according to Ibn Abi Zar‘) the Ṣanhāja were composed were actually situated.

There is controversy over where the Almoravid movement set out from. Some mention the island of Tidra, a toponym which derives from Zenāga *tīdraʿn* ‘cemetery’.

<sup>28</sup> On the probable Berber origin of Awdaghust, see Galand 1970. On its Zenāga etymology and its relation with the Hassāniyya dialect name Tegdaoust, see Taine-Cheikh 2002: 451.

<sup>29</sup> The three major salt pans in western Africa named by Cuoq (1975: 95, n. 3)—Taghāza in Mali, Idjil in southern Tiris, and Awlil on the Atlantic coast (perhaps identical to Ntarart)—have Berber-sounding names. *Idjil* comes from Berber ‘iron’(z-[z]-l), *awlil* comes from the Zenāga word meaning ‘bottom (of s’thing)’, and *an-tārart* means ‘a [place] with salt’ (Taine-Cheikh 2008a: 612, 560, 447).

<sup>30</sup> This is a Soninke dialect which has been lightly influenced by Zenāga.

<sup>31</sup> He was perhaps the only Arabic chronicler to have visited the place.



If one considers the origins of its first leaders (the Djudāla and Lamtūna tribes), the movement seems to have been born in the extreme south-west of Mauritania (perhaps near the Senegal River, whose name, in all probability, is derived from the same name, Zenāga).<sup>32</sup> It then enrolled followers from well outside the Ṣanhāja Berber tribes, including from the blacks of Bilād al-Sūdān. What became of these tribes in the Sahara after the twelfth century is the subject of controversy.

The veil of the *mulattamūn*, leaving only the eyes visible, of course suggests the Tuareg, who have retained this practice among the upper tiers of nobility through the centuries. For Hunwick (1970) and Norris (1975), who identified several groups among them whose names are comparable to those of the eleventh-century tribes (such as the Inussufen and the Massūfa), the Tuareg identity of the Lamtūnī informant of al-Suyūṭī (a famous Egyptian polymath of the fifteenth century) is beyond doubt. For Ould Cheikh (1995), who notes the presence, up to the present day, of a tribe bearing the name Lamtūna in the centre-south (Gorgol) of Mauritania, it could also have been a literate Walātian from east Mauritania, especially as stigmatization of the ‘griot’ (musician-courtier) caste was and is unknown among the Tuareg.

In fact, one may suppose that the separation into two main Ṣanhāja Berber groups must have happened quite early, at the beginning of the second millennium AD, if not before. Indeed, while Zenāga has long been considered as the western branch of Berber (Aikhenvald 1988), distinct from the other, southern branch constituted by Tuareg, features of this western Berber have been noted outside Mauritania. The discovery of Tetserrét, a minority Berber language spoken in Niger, and its greater similarity to Zenāga than to Tuareg (Attayoub 2001; Lux 2013) would tend to significantly increase the domain of western Berber. Furthermore, given that the Berber characteristics of several varieties of northern Songhai (Korandjé, Tadaksahak, Tagdal) seem also to belong to the western type (Souag 2010, 2015), it is possible that this variety of Berber still had a strong presence in the region in the fifteenth century, before the use of the language of the Songhai empire became widespread. The case of Tagdal is all the more interesting, as its name and that of the tribe which speaks it (Igdalen) both refer to the Djudāla/G(u)dāla of the Almoravid era.<sup>33</sup>

Although these groups speak languages with a very markedly mixed character, it appears that in certain highly literate tribes bilingualism is an obvious form of resistance, with the mother tongue remaining the prestige language, even if restricted to domestic use. From this viewpoint, the behaviour of the scholarly Ayytawari Seslem, speakers of Tetserrét who became bilingual following contact with the Tuareg (Walentowitz and Attayoub 2001), appears very similar to that of the last

<sup>32</sup> According to Ibn Abi Zar<sup>ṣ</sup> (who died between AD 1310 and 1320), ‘[the] Emir Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm of the Djudāla ruled after the death of Muḥammad b. Tārsinā the Lamtūnī. The Djudāla and Lamtūna are brothers, descended from the same father; they live at the extremity of the countries of Islam, in the vicinity of the Sūdān, and, to the west, border the ocean.’ (Cuoq 1975: 231).

<sup>33</sup> In the case of the Kel Aghlal Tuareg Tameseghlalt, the variety spoken by the *aklān* ‘slaves’, studied by Drouin (1984), may also contain features from western Berber. One should note that in Mauritania, Ḥassāniyya-speaking groups bear the names Gdālā and l-Aghlāl. As for the Massūfa, one sees in the Māshdūf (especially well represented in the Walāta region) some at least of their descendants.



speakers of Zenāga, who also belonged to literate tribes (Dubié 1940; Taine-Cheikh 1998). The history of relations between *zwāyā* ‘clerics or scholars (Fr. *marabouts*)’ and *ḥassān* ‘warriors’ will shed some light on the question.

### 10.2.2 GROUPS, STATUS, AND LANGUAGES

Societies in the West African Sahara and the Sahel have many common features, in both the rigidity of their hierarchies and the type of distinctions made in them.

The first of the distinctions is within the nobility between warriors and scholars, found among both nomads and sedentaries, albeit with significant variation in terms of numbers and relative political and economic weight. Whereas the warriors seem to have had the upper hand politically among the Tuareg and Soninke (as well as numerically in the former), it is the literate group Tooroḅḅe which appears to have had primacy among the Hal-Pulaaren, at least from the eighteenth century (Kane 2004: 289ff.). The bedouin society of the Western Sahara on the eve of French colonization was in the rather peculiar situation of the warriors having the upper hand politically, but the scholars being stronger in numbers.

There were exceptions to this dichotomy, given that certain Saharan tribes (e.g. the Kunta and l-Aghlāl in Mauritania, the Kel Antaṣār among the Tuareg) were literate, but also frequently waged wars. There is nonetheless an opposition between the two nobilities, that of letters and that of the sword, the genesis and importance of which, in the Western Sahara, were largely connected to the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān.

Far from being comparable to a ‘swarm of locusts’ destroying everything in its path (according to the description given by Ibn Khaldūn of the arrival of the Hilālīs in the Maghreb), the expansion of the Arabs southwards seems to have been gradual. Moreover, Arabic sources mention several successive waves of departure, that of the Awlād Rizg towards south-western Mauritania, which preceded that of the other descendants of Ūday b. Ḥassān (the Awlād Dāwūd and the Maghāfira), whereas the descendants of the other sons of Ḥassān (the Brābīsh and the Awlād Dlāym) set off in other directions, more eastward in the case of the Brābīsh. Thus it is virtually impossible to be precise about the locations of the various groups affiliated with the Banī Ḥassān. All factors indicate that the geographic positions of the various groups fluctuated, depending largely on power struggles, climatic circumstances, and other factors.

In the tenth century, Ibn Ḥawqal noted the might of the king of the Ṣanhāja and described various tribes, such as the Banū Massūfa, praising their courage, endurance, and sense of direction, and noting the tax they levied on trans-Saharan trade.

When, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Valentim Fernandes described his sojourn on the coast of Africa, to the north of Senegal, he labelled all the inhabitants *Mauros*, but also made a distinction between ‘Alarves’ (= Arabs) and ‘Azenègues’ (= Zenāga). The former ‘have neither kings, nor codes, nor ordinances’ (obeying only their own rules—including those dictated by modesty and filial respect) and ‘all consider themselves nobles’ (de Cenival and Monod 1938: 93, 97). The ‘Alarves’ despise both the ‘Azenègues’ of the sea, called *Shirmeyros* in reference to ‘fish’

(Zenāga *əššiymi* where  $y < l$ ), who live miserably off their fishing, and those who live inland, who are traders. The only ‘Azenègues’ who appear to resist them are those of the great mountain of Idjil: great in number (with two kings, ‘Azenègues’ like them), ‘these are the main enemies of the Alarves, so much so that they dare not leave their mountain, just as the Alarves dare not enter it’ (de Cenival and Monod 1938: 77).

Even if such an account has its limitations, it does display the variety of statuses and living styles across the various groups. In describing the superiority of the Arabs over most of the other groups, Fernandes aptly reflects the position of the descendants of the Banī Ḥassān in Moorish society. As for the status of the poor ‘Aznègues’, held to ransom by the ‘Alarves’, it corresponds closely to that of a tributary group. Curiously, they have become the only ones to bear the name *āznāgā* in Ḥassāniyya (*uẓnāgān* in Zenāga). This does not prove that they continued speaking Zenāga longer than the others, but it does explain why one would hardly expect a free (and noble) man to claim Zenāga (or even Berber) ancestry. As for speakers of Zenāga (past or present) who have preserved their status of nobles, they have chosen a different name, or defined themselves differently: in Zenāga as *uguḍayān*, as opposed to ‘warriors’ (*āʔrābān*);<sup>34</sup> in CLA<sup>35</sup> as *Ṣanhāja*, and in Ḥassāniyya as *zwāyā* ‘scholars’. Rare indeed are warrior tribes or groups which are not reputed to be of Arab descent (the Idawʿish are the exception that proves the rule).<sup>36</sup> But this does not mean, inversely, that all *zwāyā* tribes are former Zenāga speakers, even if the descendants of the Almoravids have generally shown much more interest in Islamic literary culture than have the descendants of the Banī Ḥassān.

Independently of groupings into tribes (*qabāʔil*) and subtribes (*āfxād* lit. ‘thighs’) where rank is the subject of continuous classification disputes (Ould Cheikh 1985), there are families which have a particular status. On the one hand there are the *iggāwān*, the traditional musicians-courtiers to the warriors,<sup>37</sup> and on the other hand the *mʿallmīn*, who, in Ḥassāniyya, are master crafters, the women working in leather, the men metal and wood. These are tightly closed groups (among whom only *iggāwān* women are allowed to marry outside), and their statuses (and titles) tend to be identical in neighbouring societies. Thus the Ḥassāniyya term *iggīw* ‘griot’, either from Wolof (*gēwel*) or Pulaar (*gawlo*), was borrowed via Zenāga (*iggiwi*, pl *āggūn*). This status has no equivalent in Tuareg society,<sup>38</sup> contrary to that of

<sup>34</sup> The term *uguḍayān* has been likened to *qāḍi* ‘judge’, one of the main functions undertaken by the scholars (Taine-Cheikh 2008: 181). Souag (2010: 184) relates the term to *tagaḍilt*, which means ‘owner (f)’ in Tetserrét.

<sup>35</sup> It is very curious to note that the form ‘*Ṣanhāja*’ (first written and then in speech) has lost, in the Moorish consciousness, all connection with the spoken form ‘Zenāga’.

<sup>36</sup> According to Dubié 1940: 320 ‘The Moors have the custom of saying: “a Moor who speaks Zenāga is certainly not a Zenāgui (which is to say: a *laḥma* or tributary), nor a warrior”... Anyone speaking Zenāga, formerly, was considered a fervent Muslim: the scholars had acquired moral and spiritual ascendancy over the Hassanes, the latter refraining from pillaging encampments where Zenāga was spoken.’

<sup>37</sup> The proverbial enmity between *zwāyā* (scholars) and griots (*lā-mṛābət mā-hu ṣāḥab iggiw* ‘The scholar is not the friend of the griot’) can be considered a legacy of the religious condemnation pronounced against the latter by the Almoravids.

<sup>38</sup> The term *aggu* ‘guitarist griot (a traditional guitar-playing bard)’ has however been noted in Niger (Prasse et al. 2003: 193).

blacksmith, which in Zenāga is called *änmu²d* (the emphasis on the final consonant reappearing in the f: *tänmu²d/tänmu²d*) and in Tuareg *éneḍ* or *enād* (de Foucauld 1951–2: 1300; Prasse et al. 2003: 589).<sup>39</sup>

In these class-ridden societies, the distinction between men who are free and those who are not is very important, but the degree and form of subordination seems to have changed over time. Thus alongside the status of slave,<sup>40</sup> one finds the *ḥarṭāni* (*āharḍan* in Zenāga) which is, depending on the case and the location within the Sahara, either a ‘freed slave’ or a descendant of the original inhabitants of the oases.<sup>41</sup>

In the light of this brief overview of West Saharan society,<sup>42</sup> one notes that, beyond the similarities with the social organization of the black sedentaries of the Valley, there is a high degree of terminological convergence between both Ḥassāniyya and Zenāga on one hand, and Zenāga and Tuareg on the other. This means that the main features of this society were already in place before the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān (Ould Cheikh 1995). However, their arrival certainly tended to make the differentiation between the people of the sword and those of the pen even sharper, especially in the south-west following the Shurr Ḥuḥḥā war in the seventeenth century, which ended in defeat for those who were seemingly in favour of a governing power more in keeping with Islamic precepts. Above all, their impact was the Arabization of the region, the resulting language retaining, however, many lexical borrowings from local languages, especially Zenāga.

Despite the importance of trade with societies in the south, the imprint left on Ḥassāniyya by black African languages appears, to date, to have been extremely small. The fact that *mbūru* ‘bread’ and *māru* ‘rice’ come from Wolof (*mburu* and *mālo*) is of little significance in a society where until recently such foods were unknown. The same could be said for the origin of *kaddu* ‘spoon’ (from the Wolof *kuddu*, WAD II: 314), especially as other forms are used with the same meaning.

Concerning terms of Pulaar origin, one may especially note: *gärtä* ‘peanut’, *nāyṛwā(l)* ‘crocodile’, *iḥumbi* ‘large calabash’, *sīrā* ‘gum incision’, and *daba* ‘seed-box iron’. Several borrowings from this language have palatalized consonants, such as *l’ibā* ‘central pillar of a dwelling’, *l’əhli* ‘hangar’, *d’owgaḷ* ‘very thick stalk (of cereals)’ and *d’ākkä* ‘keep under restraint’.

Soninke, by contrast, has less of a presence, apart from the toponym Chinguetti (< *si n-gede* ‘well of the horse’), a name which has (ironically!) become the emblem of Moorish society, and the Berberized name *ādābāy* (< *dēbé* ‘village’, cf. Diagana 2011: 39) which denotes a ‘freed’ village of sedentary *ḥṛāṭīn*. This is without counting, however, the terms from Azer noted in Tichitt by Jacques-Meunié (1961), such as *kā*

<sup>39</sup> In Tetserrét, the term used is even closer to Zenāga: *ənəmməd* ‘craftsman, blacksmith’ (Attayoub 2001: 91).

<sup>40</sup> A further category must be distinguished, of ‘tent’ slaves: Ḥassāniyya *nānmʷä* < Zenāga *oʔḥāyān nānmān* lit. ‘slaves [of] close kin’.

<sup>41</sup> One must note the distinction in gender whereby in Ḥassāniyya a female slave is termed *xādām* rather than the f of *abd*, which is not in use. It means ‘she who works, who serves’, even though the verb from which *xādām* is derived is used only in one part of Mauritania (the north and east) (Taine-Cheikh 1988–98: 516).

<sup>42</sup> In the main, it still holds today: the difficulties encountered by Mauritania in eradicating all traces of slavery are well known, as are the repeated declarations of abolition.

'house' in *kā n lak* 'house entrance', *killen* 'inside alley', *kunyu* 'kitchen' (cf. *ká*, *killé* and *kinñú* in Diagana 2011: 96, 107).

Even putting to one side the Ḥassāniyya spoken in Mali, where Heath (2004) observes a number of borrowings from Songhai, these are only a few of the terms borrowed from the languages of the sedentaries in the south. Much remains to be done in this domain, in particular to trace the origins of some of the specialized vocabulary: in music, for example (Guignard 2005), and regarding the architecture of ancient cities.

As for lexical items of Zenāga origin (or more generally Berber, some terms such as *gäymär* 'to go long-distance hunting' go back to the pan-Berber form *gmər* which is not, or no longer, used in Zenāga), they are undoubtedly the largest element, even though, once again, the inventory is not yet complete. It has often been said that subject fields such as plants, date-growing, and cattle-raising have largely borrowed from Zenāga. That is true, but these are not the only fields, as shown by the study of the various semantic areas which are tightly linked to nomadic life, whether in terms of material culture, milk production and consumption, or specialized activities of various groups, such as hunting and fishing (Taine-Cheikh 2010, 2013b, 2014c). One also notes that Ḥassāniyya, the target language, can also be a source language and that this back-and-forth at times produces 'mixed' forms. This creates, on the margins, an impression of proximity between the two languages, without Ḥassāniyya or Zenāga losing the distinctiveness which makes the first a variety of Arabic, and the second a variety of Berber. Beyond this distinctiveness, however, there are many similarities, especially from a typological standpoint.

### 10.2.3 CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC UNIFICATION

Although the overarching term *Mauros* used by Fernandes undoubtedly corresponded, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, only to a very partial unification of groups speaking Zenāga and Ḥassāniyya, five centuries on there has indeed been total integration of both communities within what has become Mauritania. Indeed, the last speakers of Zenāga all consider themselves members of the group of *bīḍān* (an ethnonym which denotes whiteness and which is generally translated as 'Moors'). The fact that this community defines itself first and foremost negatively, in contrast to the *sūdān* ('blacks'), is a feature shared by all nomadic groups in the Western Sahara and is the outcome of centuries of relationships, both cooperative and competitive, with the sedentary groups to the south and south-east.

The main factor in the recession of Zenāga was certainly the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān, but the existence of several empires in which other languages predominated may have hastened its extinction. This seems to have been especially the case in the east, where, from the eighth century, the empires of Ghana, Mali, and the Songhai successively ruled over the geographic area inhabited by the Zenāga.

In the south-west there have been other kingdoms but, in contrast to the eastern regions of Tichitt and Walāta, where the power of the empires appears to have been wielded forcefully, the western region of Trarza seems to have had more peaceful relations with the kingdom of Waalo. On the banks of the river Senegal one finds groups claiming the same ancestry (the famous sherif *bū-bāzzūl* (lit. 'of the breast'),

so called because he is said to have suckled his son in the absence of his mother), and that could be an indication of this closeness. Furthermore, the oral traditions of the Waalo depict Abū Bakr Ibn ʿUmar, the chief of the southern branch of the Almoravids, as the ancestor of several branches of the royal dynasty of Waalo (Monteil 1964; Bonte 1998: 67).<sup>43</sup>

More concretely, the trade relations created by the trans-Saharan coastal route have contributed to giving the south-western region a special status in its relations with the tribes of southern Morocco. This involvement in a trade route distinct from those inland helps shed light on the split between areas using *g* and those using *g* > *q*. It has also facilitated the preservation of the particularities of the south-western region, especially following the decline of the western branch of trans-Saharan trade, starting perhaps as early as the fifteenth century. Indeed Wolof in particular, which, in the twentieth century, has often been used in Mauritania as a *lingua franca*, was also used at an earlier period in the south-west for cross-community communication, and was therefore in a position to compete with Ḥassāniyya as a trade language.

In the absence of precise descriptions as to how and at what speed Ḥassāniyya was adopted following the arrival of the Banī Ḥassān, one can compare the situation of Zenāga speakers, as laid out in Dubié 1940, with the current situation (Ould Cheikh 2008). At the time of Dubié's study, Zenāga was being spoken by about 13,000 people only, and among the three tribes still speaking it, transmission to younger generations is assured only by the Idab Lahsen tribe, the tribe of our informant. The forecast death of Zenāga has thus moved closer, largely as a result of schooling and migration to the capital Nouakchott. Though there were particularly violent upheavals in the second half of the twentieth century, the language switch to Ḥassāniyya has happened very slowly, and depended on the closeness of the relationship with purely Ḥassāniyya-speaking groups and matrimonial alliances.<sup>44</sup> It is noteworthy that the Idab Lahsen who, for historical reasons (stemming from the war of Shurr Ḥubbā), married less outside their tribe and stayed further away from the Trarza Emir's encampment, are also the ones who have best preserved their language.

Dubié 1940: 319 gives another reason for this conservatism: the fact that the Idab Lahsen were all 'lesser roaming' nomads and that, among the two other groupings, the 'lesser roaming' tribes had preserved Zenāga better than the 'wider roaming' ones. If this fact did play a part, which is highly probable, it could also shed light on one of the factors which made possible the transmission of Ḥassāniyya. However, the mere fact of groups (and individuals) being brought into close contact and spending more

<sup>43</sup> Lastly, one may mention the case of the tribe of the Awlād Bānʿnʿūg. This very southern branch of the Banī Ḥassān, whose territory is located at the mouth of the river Senegal, is known in effect for speaking Ḥassāniyya with traces of Wolof—an influence which could be explained by the fact that the members of this tribe are often Arabic–Wolof bilinguals.

<sup>44</sup> Marriage with non-Zenāga speakers certainly played an important role, especially in a patrilineal society (or one that became one long ago) such as that of the Moors. Studies on kinship in the Adrar tribes show how the matrimonial rule of female hypergamy (= not marrying a person of a lower social class) was manipulated to reinforce the political power of the Emir and tribal chiefs (Bonte 1987, 1998). Indirectly, they attest to the fact that more closed groups prefer marriage among first cousins, whereas political alliances favour marriage with women from further afield.

or less lengthy periods of time together is not a sufficient explanation of why there is so little variation in Ḥassāniyya across time and space. Certainly, there were no religious conflicts liable to favour particular linguistic features, and one cannot say either that the ancient cities were composed of true sedentary populations, in contrast to the world of the nomads, because the cities were fully involved in trans-Saharan trade. As far as a central government is concerned, it began to appear in embryonic form only at the time of independence, in 1962. The emirates, the first of which (Trarza) dates back to the seventeenth century, do not seem to have shown any desire for explicit control over Ḥassāniyya, despite the indirect influence they certainly had in promoting the dialect.

In order for the unity of Ḥassāniyya to be preserved, there must have been, among Arab warriors, some sort of ‘communal vision’ capable of transcending the anarchistic and individualistic tendencies they are otherwise known for. This shared vision, which considered genealogy the sole point of reference, even if it was reconstructed, was fundamentally ‘retrospective’ and showed a tendency, in language as elsewhere, to glorify the past. This did not prevent Ḥassāniyya from evolving and introducing some innovations, but these are of a different type from those commonly observed among sedentary tribes. Indeed, Ḥassāniyya has on the whole remained a ‘synthetic’ type of language, showing none of the innovations typical of ‘neo-Arabic’, such as: loss of direct annexation to express the genitive, and for numerals followed by a count noun; use of preverbal particles before the p-stem (especially to distinguish the habitual from the present continuous, and the possible from the certain); use of a discontinuous negative; creation of a (new) indefinite; placing an adverb before an adjective to express comparison; the disappearance of specifically passive constructions. In all of these areas, on the contrary, Ḥassāniyya shows constructions close to what are found in OA/CLA.

From this perspective, it is also not impossible that the intimate knowledge the *zwāyā* groups had of the corpus of Islamic texts played a role. The fact that all the children of literate families (boys and girls alike) spent their childhoods memorizing the Qurʾān, with the brightest knowing it by heart before the age of twelve, must certainly have left traces, indirectly, on the dialect. Moreover, such speakers were highly normative in their use of CLA—a *lahn* (‘solecism’) was shameful (Miské 1970: 47).<sup>45</sup> This prescriptive tendency certainly influenced how they spoke the dialect, notably in demonstrating that they were capable of speaking Ḥassāniyya correctly. Indeed, one must not forget that Ḥassāniyya was the language of the victors (the Arab warriors) and that a good *biḍāni* is a Moor who has mastered the dialect perfectly.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> This normative attitude is apparent especially in the controversy surrounding the CLA pronunciation of the *qād* (Bouvat 1913).

<sup>46</sup> Some nomadic groups of Peuls who had very close ties to the Moors were also known for the excellence of their Ḥassāniyya. A deliberate tendency to not respect the rules of grammar in speaking Ḥassāniyya appeared among black Africans only after the forced imposition of CLA in schools and the administration and, more generally, a policy of oppressing the blacks, culminating in the events of the 1990s (Dia 2007).

Although different in nature from CLA, Ḥassāniyya was just as unlikely to escape prescriptive attitudes because, for centuries, it was the language in which poetry was composed. Such poetry was highly popular, and followed simpler metrics than CLA poetry (*šīʿr*, composed only by the educated), but nonetheless had to obey a set of complex rules, the most important being the number of syllables per hemistich, and their length (Taine-Cheikh 1985). Poetry appears to be particularly well developed among nomadic peoples (Sowayan 1985) and, on this point, the Banī Ḥassān, like the *bīdān* as a whole, doubtless merely perpetuated ancient traditions. One must, however, note that the synthetic style of Ḥassāniyya is especially well suited to poetic composition. Profuse lexical creation in the language could perhaps also in part be ascribed to this poetic bent. Be that as it may, this is certainly the case for the major panegyric poems (*thäydīn*) composed by griots.

However, beyond purely lexical innovations, one also notes in Ḥassāniyya the frequent extension of the rules of derivation (Taine-Cheikh 1991b):

- to (re)form the passive of derived patterns (with the prefix *u-* in the *s*-stem);
- to create diminutive and elative forms for entire series of lexemes (nouns, adjectives, and verbs for the former; adjectives and verbs for the latter).

These derivations are used in OA syntactic constructions of a synthetic type which have often disappeared from the dialects (especially among sedentary groups in the Maghreb). For this reason, and because derivations such as the diminutive are particularly productive in the dialects of nomads, these specific features can be considered characteristic of ‘bedouin’ dialects.

Within that framework, it is interesting to note that Zenāga and Ḥassāniyya have many points in common. Some are also points of divergence from the northern dialects, such as absence of discontinuous negation and of a preverbal particle before the *p*-stem. Others appear rather to be innovations parallel to forms in Ḥassāniyya. This is especially the case with:

- *yānhäyā* ‘be preoccupied (by)’, used in Zenāga to express the future, whereas in Ḥassāniyya one uses *lāhi*, a participial form with nearly identical meaning;
- diminutive forms which, in the masculine singular, combine the feminine suffix *-t* and the prefix *aġ-*, such that Zenāga, at least for nouns, has equivalents for Ḥassāniyya diminutives.<sup>47</sup>

The inventory of similarities between Zenāga and Ḥassāniyya shows that they are numerous, including some in phonetics and phonology, but Zenāga cannot explain the peculiarities of /f/ in Ḥassāniyya (pronounced voiced except in Mali) nor those of /g/ (except perhaps for the geminate *ġġ > qq*).<sup>48</sup> In contrast, causative derivation in Zenāga, even though it is marked more often by the prefix *ša-* than by the prefix *sa-* (or *za-* or *şa-*), certainly influenced the formation of the new causative derivation: one also finds in Ḥassāniyya forms in *sā-* such as *sāntā* ‘begin’ and *sādbā* ‘make

<sup>47</sup> This novel formation, found in the toponym Awdaghust (lit. ‘people of the small west’) and in many other toponyms as far afield as the Walāta region, was also noted in Tetserrēt by Attayoub (2001).

<sup>48</sup> In Zenāga, *ġ > ʿ*.



(s'one) leave in the afternoon' which clearly are from Zenāga roots (Taine-Cheikh 2003). This is one of the traits in Ḥassāniyya whose origin is hotly disputed, but there are a few others in the morphosyntactic domain (Taine-Cheikh 2008b).

At the close of this attempt at a historical reconstruction, it seems that although classification by dialectal features is often difficult (because of, among other reasons, the 'multivalence' of dialect features (Ingham 1982: 31), the typological dichotomy between 'bedouin' dialects and 'sedentary' dialects retains its full explanatory power. It is probable however that, in order to keep its characteristics, the 'bedouin' dialect type must have been transmitted without any disruption and without 'corruption' from outside influences (Versteegh 2011: 544). In the case of Ḥassāniyya, this is indeed what happened. 'Corruption' could have come from contact with Zenāga if this language variety had not also been a language of the 'bedouin' type. There was thus a radical language shift, but it did not affect the unity, the synthetic nature, or the non-innovatory character (except in derivation) of the 'glottophagic' Arabic language.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> On the notion of 'glottophagic language', see Calvet 1974.



## South Arabian and Arabic dialects

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With the Islamic conquests, and in the centuries that followed, Arabic came into close contact with the original ancient non-Arabic languages of the Peninsula, leaving the language situation in the south-west of the Arabian Peninsula today as one in which dialects of Arabic exhibit, to a greater or lesser degree, linguistic features of Ancient South Arabian (ASA) and the Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs) (cf. Holes 2006a). In this chapter,<sup>1</sup> I compare phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic data from a number of contemporary varieties spoken within historical Yemen—i.e. within the borders of current Yemen and up into southern ‘Asīr in Saudi Arabia—with (a) data from the ASA language, Sabaic; (b) what has been called ‘Ḥimyaritic’, as spoken during the early centuries of Islam; and (c) the MSALs, Mehri and Ṣherēt. These comparisons show a significant number of shared features. The density of shared features and the nature of sharing exhibited lead me to suggest, albeit tentatively, that some of these varieties may be continuations of South Arabian with an Arabic overlay rather than Arabic with a South Arabian substratum.

Phonological features considered include: the articulation of sibilants and emphatics; total anticipatory assimilation of /n/; and pausal glottalization. Morphological features include the invariable rel pron *ḏa*-; the so-called *k*-perfect; palatalization of the 2fsng obj/poss suffix; the *-t* ending in absolute position; and the nasal def article. Syntactic features include agreement patterns in rel clauses in Rijāl Alma<sup>c</sup> (a dialect spoken in south-west Saudi Arabia), and Sabaic; and a particular construction for

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expressing continuous aspect attested in Rāziḥīt, spoken in far northern Yemen, and in Sabaic.

Within this chapter I also consider phonological and lexical features that are shared between South Arabian and varieties that are clearly Arabic, either as substrate features or as a result of migration and language contact. Thus I consider lexical features rare in Arabic, but shared between Modern South Arabian and the Arabic spoken in Oman and North Africa. I also consider the possibility that the Arabic word stress puzzle in many dialects spoken, particularly outside the Peninsula, most well documented for Cairene, whereby the suffixed 3<sup>rd</sup> sng s-stem marker invariably takes word stress, may be due to influence from Modern South Arabian.

### 11.1 PHONOLOGICAL LINKS BETWEEN SOUTH ARABIAN AND YEMENI DIALECTS

In this section, I consider reflexes of the sibilants and the emphatics, the total anticipatory assimilation of /n/, and glottalization in pre-pausal position.

#### 11.1.1 LATERAL SIBILANTS, LATERAL EMPHATICS, AND AFFRICATES

The MSALs exhibit plain and emphatic lateral sibilants, and make a phonological distinction between the cognates of Arabic \*ḍ and \*ḍ̤. On the basis of lateral cognates in Biblical Hebrew and Modern South Arabian, it is considered probable that ASA s<sup>2</sup> had a lateral articulation (cf. Steiner 1977; Beeston 1984; Sima 2001). This is suggested by the fact that s<sup>2</sup> is not used to transcribe North-west Semitic š. Within northern Yemen, a slightly lateralized reflex of \*š is attested in Rāziḥīt, and until recently the reflex of \*ḍ in the same location<sup>2</sup> was a voiceless lateral affricate in traditional words.<sup>3</sup>

There are indications that emphatics which are not stops may originally have been realized as affricates in some Semitic languages (Steiner 1982). Beside the lateral affricate reflex of \*ḍ in Rāziḥīt, a non-pharyngealized /st/ reflex of the emphatic sibilant is attested in a number of north Yemeni dialects—*stadigin* ‘friend’, *stabrin* ‘patience’ (Behnstedt 1987a; 1987b; 1998)—and in Faifi, spoken north of the current Yemen–Saudi border, e.g. *stayfin* ‘summer’ (Abdullah al-Faifi p.c.). On the basis of

<sup>2</sup> Behnstedt (1987a), on the basis of information from one informant in an-Naḍīr [sic], describes the reflexes of \*š and \*ḍ as retroflex. According to Bonnie Glover Stalls (p.c.), who spent several months conducting linguistic fieldwork in in-Naḍīr, these sounds are more lateral than retroflex, though the laterality of \*š is slight today, and may now be historical. An electropalatographic investigation of this variety would be useful at this point—with the palatograms showing the place of articulation, and the linguograms providing information about the tongue shape, including degree of laterality.

<sup>3</sup> Behnstedt (1987a: 136) notes 160 forms with the pan-Yemeni voiced pharyngealized interdental fricative as opposed to 70 forms with the retroflex /ɖ/ (i.e. a retroflex [tʃ]). According to Bonnie Glover Stalls (p.c.), the voiceless lateral affricate reflex of *ḍād* is present within the phonological memory of some present speakers but is no longer in current usage.

frequent similar sound changes in Egyptian Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, and Syriac, Behnstedt (1987b: 8–9; 1998: 7; cf. also Steiner 1982) suggests that Yemeni /st/ may have originally been an affricate \*ts which was subject to metathesis, making affrication in these varieties the phonetic correlate of emphasis.

The cognate of \*ḏ is generally reconstructed as an emphatic lateralized fricative in Proto-Semitic (Kogan 2011). Lateral fricative and lateral sonorant realizations of \*ḏ are still found today in dialects within Rijāl Alma<sup>4</sup> and al-Rubū‘ah in south-west Saudi Arabia (Watson and Al-Azraqi 2011; Heselwood et al. 2013), in Ghaylḥabbān in the Ḥaḍramawt (Habtour 1988), and in the dialect spoken by the Bayt Kathīr in western Oman. A number of dialects spoken in the south-west of Saudi Arabia continue to make a phonological distinction between \*ḏ and \*ḏ̣ (Watson and Al-Azraqi 2011; Heselwood et al. 2013).

### 11.1.2 ASSIMILATION OF /n/

Total anticipatory assimilation of /n/ to non-guttural consonants is a productive phonological process in northern Yemeni Rāziḥīt, as exemplified in: *našar* – *yīššur* ‘to go out after midday’, *nagal* – *yiggul* ‘to extract’, *našad* – *yīššud* ‘to ask’, *itnēn* ~ *tattē* ‘two (m, f)’ (Sabaic *tty*) (cf. also *ssān* ‘man’, *ssānih* ‘woman’, etymologically related to \**insān*, cf. Behnstedt 1987b: 98), but *anḥa*<sup>5</sup> ‘we’. Assimilation of /n/ is now historical in Modern South Arabian,<sup>4</sup> with evidence of assimilation in lexicalized forms only, as in Mehri: *ḡannūn* ~ *ḡannawn* ‘small (msng)’, *ḡannitt* (< *ḡannan*-t) ‘small (fsng)’; *tēt* ‘woman’ is pronounced without initial /n/, and the /n/ reappears in the plural form *inēt* ‘women’. In Šherēt, /n/ of the prepositions *min* ‘from’, *ken* ‘from [a person]’ and *‘an* ‘from, by’ assimilates totally to the consonants of the sng, but not the pl pronoun suffixes, as in: *mek* ‘from you (msng)’, *mēs*<sup>5</sup> ‘from you (fsng)’, *mēs* ‘from him’, *mes* ‘from her’, but *munkum* ‘from you (mpl)’ and *munhum* ‘from them (m)’; /n/ is absent in the singular of words relating to woman, e.g. *tēt* ‘woman’, *tyet* ‘newly married woman’, but returns, as it does in Mehri, in the plural: *inēt* ‘women’, *nṭinīti* ‘newly married women’.

Total anticipatory assimilation of /n/ was a regular occurrence in mid-Sabaic and late Sabaic, as evidenced by the frequent defective spellings of certain words, such as: *ʔfs* < *ʔnfs*, *bt* < *bnt*, *ʔtt* < *ʔntt* (Stein 2003: 19; cf. also Beeston 1984: 11). A comparative frequency count of defective versus full spellings in mid- and late-Sabaic inscriptions indicates that /n/ assimilation became an increasingly common process in the language, particularly in the area around Mārib and the central Yemeni highlands (Stein 2003: 20).<sup>6</sup> Total assimilation of /n/ to a following sonorant is a common

<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise noted, Mehri data from eastern Yemen (Mahriyōt) are taken from my own recordings and the sound files published on the Semitic Sound Archive, University of Heidelberg ([http://www.semarch.uni-hd.de/index.php43?LD\\_ID=5&RG\\_ID=3&lang=en](http://www.semarch.uni-hd.de/index.php43?LD_ID=5&RG_ID=3&lang=en)). Mehri data from western Oman (Mehreyyet) are taken from my own recordings, some of which are available on the Semitic Sound Archive ([http://www.semarch.uni-hd.de/index.php43?LD\\_ID=1&RG\\_ID=6&lang=en](http://www.semarch.uni-hd.de/index.php43?LD_ID=1&RG_ID=6&lang=en)). The translations are my own.

<sup>5</sup> /s/ denotes the labialized, hushing alveo-palatal in Šherēt that contrasts with the alveo-palatal sibilant /s/.

<sup>6</sup> Anticipatory assimilation of *n*- is a feature of the epigraphy of West Arabia, and appears to have been a feature of whatever language the Kindah spoke, as their tribal name is written *kdt* (Ahmad al-Jallad, p.c.).

process in languages of the world, including dialects of Arabic (cf. Watson 2002; Elramli 2012). Total assimilation of /n/ to a following obstruent, however, is not. The occasional results of assimilation of /n/ in Andalusian, with examples such as /att/ 'you (msng)' < \**anta* and /kittará/ 'you would see' < \**kint tara*, Corriente (1989b: 97) considers to be a sign of South Arabian influence. The result of total assimilation of /n/ to a following obstruent is found in a very few lexicalized forms in various Arabic dialects (Elramli 2012)—notably in the words *bint* > *bitt* 'girl' and *kunt* > *kutt* 'I/you (msng) was/were' (Egyptian) and *kunta* > *kutta* 'I/you (msng) was/were' (Sudanese), 'ind- > 'idna 'with us', 'idkum 'with you (mpl)' (Baḥārna of Bahrain, Clive Holes p.c.)—but with few exceptions the trigger of assimilation shares with /n/ both the articulation feature [coronal], and the manner feature [non-continuant]. Toll (1983: 11) notes a few instances of /n/ assimilation to coronal and non-coronal obstruents in the Ḥijāzi dialect of Ghāmid: assimilation to /z/ in the word \**manzal* [mazzal] 'house', and assimilation to /x/, /š/, and /t/ apparently involving the preposition /min/ 'from'. Elsewhere before non-coronals, /n/ assimilates in place only (e.g. [jambīya] 'dagger', [zumbil] 'basket', [mun kull] 'of all'). To my knowledge, no other recorded dialect of Arabic exhibits productive total anticipatory assimilation of /n/ to obstruents.

### 11.1.3 PAUSAL GLOTTALIZATION

Pausal glottalization appears to be an areal feature affecting much of the south-western Peninsula. Many Yemeni Arabic dialects spoken in the Central Highlands (Behnstedt 1985; Nāim-Sanbar 1994; Nāim 2009), the western mountain range and southern 'Asir, and the MSALs of southern Arabia devoice and pre-glottalize pre-pausal non-aspirated (emphatic and voiced) consonants, and post-glottalize pre-pausal vowels (Watson and Asiri 2007, 2008; Watson and Bellem 2011; Watson 2012; Nāim and Watson 2013; Watson and Heselwood 2016; cf. Simeone-Senelle 1997, 2011). Pausal glottalization of oral stops in these varieties results in ejective oral stops, as in: Ṣan'āni: *dagīʔkʔ* < /dagīg/ 'flour', *barāgutʔ* < /barāguṭ/ 'lumps', *dağāʔḡʔ* < /dağāğ/ 'chicken'; Rijāl Alma': *xālītʔ* < /xālid/ 'Khalid [proper noun]'; Yemeni Mehri: *ḡayʔḡʔ* < /ḡayğ/ 'man', *ṭāʔtʔ* < /ṭād/ 'one (m)'; Omani Mehri: *ʕaylīʔkʔ* < /ʕayliğ/ 'young male camel calf'.<sup>7</sup>

In these varieties, utterance-final sonorants in final heavy syllables tend to lack any acoustic signal, though electropalatographic and visual phonetic analysis indicate that the final sonorant is articulated, as in: Mehri: *ḡannawʔ* < /ḡannawn/ 'small (msng)', *karmayʔ* < /karmaym/ 'hill', *ḡāwēʔ* < /ḡāwēl/ 'at first'; Ṣḡerēt: *iz irūʔ* < /iz irūn/ 'goat owners', *kīzūʔ* < /kīzūm/ 'in the past', *fiṣāʔ* < /fiṣāl/ 'plenty'; Ṣan'āni: *fīrʔ* < /fīrn/ 'oven', *ḡuʔʔ* < /ḡuṭn/ 'cotton', *ḡalīʔ* < /ḡalil/ 'a little' (Watson and Heselwood, 2016).

Pre-pausal glottalization may also affect final voiceless stops and fricatives in CVVC syllables, but post-aspiration of voiceless stops and increased voiceless breath

<sup>7</sup> The sounds corresponding to those known in CLA as *qalqalah*: \*q, \*j, \*d, \*b, \*ṭ.

at the offset of voiceless fricatives acts in most cases to prevent neutralization of voiced and voiceless obstruents in pre-pausal position, as in: Omani Mehri: *ʔagbōʔtʰ* < /ʔagbōt/ ‘she liked’, *ḡafḡkawʔkʰ* < /ḡafḡkaw/ ‘I/you (msng) cheated’. In Sanʿāni Arabic, as shown in Watson and Bellem 2011 and Watson and Heselwood 2016, aspirated stops in final CVVC syllables are saliently both pre- and post-aspirated in pre-pausal position, as in: *šfūʰtʰ* < /šfūt/ ‘dish of yoghurt, fermented bread and chilli’, *mawʰtʰ* < /mawt/ ‘death’.

## 11.2 MORPHOLOGICAL LINKS BETWEEN SOUTH ARABIAN AND YEMENI DIALECTS

Morphological links between Ancient and Modern South Arabian, so-called Ḥimyaritic (Robin 2007), and Yemeni Arabic dialects have long been recognized (Retsö 2000). These include the indeclinable rel marker *ḍ*-, the realization of the 2fsng obj suffix as *-iš* rather than as *-ki* or *-ik*, the *k*-perfect verbal endings for 1sng and 2nd persons, the *-t* feminine nominal ending in absolute and definite states as well as the construct state, the nasal definite article, and the *daw* neg particle attested in parts of the Ḥugariyyah and south-west Yemen (Behnstedt 1985: 170).

### 11.2.1 THE INDECLINABLE RELATIVE MARKER *ḍ*- IN SABAIC

The indeclinable rel marker *ḍ*- in Sabaic (Beeston 1984: 41; Stein 2003: 150) and Mehri (Sima 2005; Watson 2009) is recorded for a large number of Yemeni Arabic dialects in the north and south of the central mountain range (Behnstedt 1985) and in eastern dialects (Behnstedt 2001).<sup>8</sup> Consider the examples from Rāziḥīt, Mehri, and Sabaic:

Rāziḥīt:

- (1) (a) *min hōh ḍī tzawwaḡ bi-wāḥdah sānah, ḍī kānic timuṭṭīhā*  
 who rel married with-one woman rel aux-you you-beat-her  
 ‘Who was it who married a woman, the one you (fsng) used to beat?’
- (b) *minān nagalū ḍī kānām bū bēt ḡaddih ‘Alī*  
 from-where they-came rel they-were in house (of) grandfather Ali  
 ‘Where did they come from, those who lived in Grandfather Ali’s house . . .’  
 (Watson et al. 2006b)

Mehri:

- (2) (a) *šaxbār ḍ-bār sābkūk b-sānn*  
 ‘Ask him **who** is older than you’ (Sima 2005: 86)
- (b) *ḡābū ḍ-šīḡām lhāyṭān māḡān yaḡarmān lhāyṭān*  
 ‘People **who** have many cows slaughter cows’ (Sima 2009)

<sup>8</sup> As pointed out by Ahmad al-Jallad, the indeclinable *ḍa*- can be seen as a general Arabic archaism.

Sabaic:

- (3) (a) *šlmnhn d̥t d̥hbn d̥-šftt mr<sup>2</sup>-hmw ʔlmqh* J 706/3–5  
 ‘(… has) dedicated the bronze female statuette, **which** she promised to her husband ʔLMQH’ (Stein 2003: 150)
- (b) *ʔfrs<sup>1</sup>m/d̥-hrgw*  
 ‘Horses **which** they slaughtered’ (Beeston 1984: 43)

### 11.2.2 *kaškašah* / *šinšinnah*

The realization of the 2fsng obj and poss pron as *-iš* or *-ic* (= [-its]) is characteristic of southern Ethio-Semitic and Modern South Arabian, and is widely attested in Arabic varieties spoken in Yemen, ʿAsīr, central and southern Najd, al-Ḥasa, Bahrain (Baḥārna dialects), the UAE, Oman, and in the dialect of the ʿAjmān of Kuwait (Holes 1991, quoting Johnstone 1961). This phenomenon has been described as *kaškašah* in the literature (e.g. Watson 1992; Al-Azraqi 2007); however, since *kaškašah* most probably refers to the realization of *k* of the 2fsng suffix pron specifically as the addition of *-š* to *k*-, i.e. as a means of representing an affricate *-č* (see §1.3.1 and Glossary, this volume) the fronting of /*k*/ in these instances to /*š*/ should be described as *šinšinnah* (Rabin 1951: 50). Consider the following examples from Yemen compared with data from southern Ethio-Semitic and Modern South Arabian:

- (4) Sanʿāni (Yemen): *absart-iš* ‘I saw you (fsng)’, *bint-iš* ‘your (fsng) daughter’, *minn-iš* ‘from you (fsng)’
- (5) Rāziḥit: *fihmū-c* ‘they (m) understood you (fsng)’, *bēt-ic* ‘your (fsng) house’, *naḥā-c* ‘at your (fsng) house/ with you (fsng)’
- (6) Amharic: *näggärä-š* ‘he told you (fsng)’, *wəšša-š* ‘your (fsng) dog’
- (7) Omani Mehri: *aḡarb-aš* ‘I know you (fsng)’, *šink tē-š* ‘I/you (msng) saw you (fsng)’, *hnī-š* ‘at your (fsng) house’, *ḥabrit-š* ‘your (fsng) daughter’
- (8) Šherēt: *šink to-š* ‘I/you (msng) saw you (fsng)’, *ʿa-š* ‘from you (fsng)’, *ī-š* ‘your (fsng) father’

In varieties where (most commonly) *-ic* is attested alongside general palatalization of /*k*/ in high-vowel environments, the palatalized realization of the 2fsng morpheme may be due to this general palatalization. In many dialects, however, generalized palatalization is not evident and therefore *-iš* must be interpreted as a substrate feature from Modern South Arabian, as argued by Holes (1991). We also know that this is a relatively recent phenomenon in Semitic, as neither ASA nor Ancient Ethio-Semitic exhibit palatalization of 2 fsng /*k*/ to /*š*/.

### 11.2.3 THE *k*-PERFECT (1SNG AND 2ND PERSON)

The *k*-perfect 1sng and 2nd-person subject suffixes (which are in all other varieties of Arabic formed with *-t(V)*) are a feature of Yemeni dialects throughout the western

mountain range (Behnstedt 1985, 1987a, 1987b) up to Jabal Rāziḥ and the region around Ṣaʿdah in the north, in southern Yemeni Yāfiʿ (Vanhove 1995a, 1995b), Modern South Arabian (Simeone-Senelle 1997, 2011), Sabaic, Minaean (Stein 2007: 25), Ḥimyaritic (Robin 1991–3, 2007), and the ancient and modern languages of Ethio-Semitic. This feature is not attested in the south-west Saudi Arabian varieties of Faifi or Rijāl Almaʿ, but has recently been documented north of the present-day Yemeni–Saudi border (Alfaifi and Behnstedt, 2010). An interesting difference between the *k*-dialects of Yemen and the languages of Ethio-Semitic, on the one hand, and Modern South Arabian, and what we know of the Saudi *k*-dialects, on the other, is that the former distinguish between 1sng and 2msng, while the latter do not. Compare these examples:

- (9) Amharic: *qom-k* ‘you (msng) got up’, *qom-ku* ‘I got up’, *säbbär-ku* ‘I broke’
- (10) Rāziḥīt: *sarḥ-uk* ‘I went before noon’, *sarḥ-ik* ‘you (msng) went before noon’
- (11) Arabic dialect of Ibb (Yemen): *iṣṭarō-k* ‘I bought’, *iṣṭarē-k* ‘you (msng) bought’
- (12) Mehri: *haṣbaḥ-k* ‘I/you (msng) got up in the morning’, *syar-k* ‘I/you (msng) went’
- (13) Šherēt: *khab-k* ‘I/you (msng) came at midday’, *nfoś-k* ‘I/you (msng) went in the afternoon’

In varieties which exhibit both *k*-perfect endings and palatalization of the 2fsng suffix pron, including southern Ethio-Semitic and Modern South Arabian, both the 2fsng perfect subj pron and the 2fsng obj pron are realized as *-š* or *-c* (cf. also Behnstedt 1985: 82, 118), as in:

- (14) Rāziḥīt: *jī-c* ‘you (fsng) came’, *rē-c* ‘you (fsng) saw’, *katb-ic* ‘you (fsng) wrote’
- (15) Mehri: *šin-aš* ‘you (fsng) saw’, *syar-š* ‘you (fsng) went’
- (16) Šherēt: *khab-š* ‘you (fsng) came at midday’, *ḡsom-š* ‘you (fsng) went early morning’
- (17) Amharic: *säbbär-š* ‘you (fsng) broke’, *näbbär-š* ‘you (fsng) were’

#### 11.2.4 THE *-t* FEMININE ENDING IN NOUNS

The *-t* f ending is attested for many nouns in Rāziḥīt, always in the definite and construct states, but, as in Modern South Arabian, Sabaic, and Ethio-Semitic, also in the absolute state in many basic nouns. Since early loans into Persian, Kurdish, and Berber show Arabic *tā marbūṭa* adopted as *-at*, preservation of *-t* can be seen here as an archaism shared with South Arabian and Ethio-Semitic. Consider these examples:

- (18) Rāziḥīt: *baʿd sāʿit* ‘after an hour’, *ḡahwit* ‘small room on lower floor for animals’, *dēmit* ‘kitchen’, *šōfit* ‘(married) woman’, *iḥ-ḥalgit* ‘the series’, *ik-kaḍbit* ‘the lie’
- (19) Mehri: *salfat* ‘story (f)’, *ʿaydit* ~ *aydit* ‘sardine (f)’

- (20) Šherēt: *yit* ‘camel mare’, *šebdet* ‘liver (f)’
- (21) Amharic: *gärmän-awi* ‘a male German’ > *gärmän-awi-t* ‘a female German’ (Meyer 2011: 1190)

In the adjective class, Rāziḥīt deals with f gender in three ways: it is not explicitly marked on verbal participles; in some non-participle adjectives it is marked by final *-ah*; and in other non-participle adjectives by final *-it* in all three states—absolute, definite, and construct. Adjectives that take final *-it* include all the *nisbah* adjectives and a small set of non-*nisbah* adjectives:

- (22) Rāziḥīt: *bunnīt* ‘brown’, *ašlīt* ‘original’, *gudēmīt* ‘old’, *lahğah rāziḥīt* ‘Rāziḥīt dialect’ (Watson et al. 2006a, 2006b)

/t/ is also a feature of f adj marking in Modern South Arabian:

- (23) Yemeni Mehri (Mahriyōt): *lbōn – labnīt* ‘white (m–f)’, *‘wēr – ‘awrīt* ‘blind (m–f)’
- (24) Omani Mehri (Mehreyyet): *ūbōn – ūbanīt* ‘white (m–f)’, *dwayl – dwaylat* ‘old (m–f)’
- (25) Šherēt: *nīšan – nšinūt* ‘small (m–f)’, *rḥīm – rḥīt* ‘nice, good (m–f)’

The *-t* f ending in all states was a salient feature distinguishing the ancient Arabian languages, including the varieties spoken in north-central Arabia, from Arabic: according to legend, the King of Ḥimyar expressed the absence of Arabic in his language, Ḥimyaritic, with the words: *laysa ‘indanā ‘arabiyyat* ‘there is no Arabic amongst us’ where it is explained that, unlike in Arabic, *-t* is not dropped in pause (Rabin 1951: 34). Native speakers of Rāziḥīt explicitly contrast their language with what they describe as ‘Yamanīt’, i.e. varieties spoken outside the area.

### 11.2.5 THE NASAL DEFINITE ARTICLE

The nasal definite article, mentioned by Macdonald (2000) as one of the features that distinguishes non-Arabic Semitic languages of the Peninsula from Arabic, is attested throughout the Yemeni and Saudi Tihāma (Greenman 1979), and in the mountain area of the far north of Yemen (Behnstedt 1985, 1987b: 85–6). The article is *hn-/h-/o* in Ancient North Arabian (Macdonald 2000; Stein 2003: 85) and *n-* or *m-* in Ḥimyaritic (Al-Hamdāni 1884–91; Robin 1991: 204, 2007: 259, 260). In many dialects of northern and coastal Yemen and south-western Saudi Arabia, it is realized as invariable *m-* or *n-*, depending on dialect. Examples include:

- (26) im-Maṭṭah (Yemen): *im-rağul* ‘the man’ (Behnstedt 1987b: 84)
- (27) Khāshir (Yemen): *im-ḥēfah* ‘the field’ (Behnstedt 1987b: 84)
- (28) Majz (Yemen): *in-ṣa’bah* ‘the female donkey foal’ (Behnstedt 1987b: 86)
- (29) Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>: *im-brat* ‘the girl’ (Asiri 2009)

Egyptian exhibits the *n-* definite article in one case only: *im-bāriḥ* ‘yesterday’; since Egyptian is known to have been influenced by Yemeni dialects, it is possible that this



form has emerged through Yemeni influence. Interestingly, although some *k*-dialects exhibit the *n*-definite article today (compare maps 8 and 27 in Behnstedt 1987b), no extant *k*-dialects appear to exhibit the *m*-definite article (Behnstedt 2007).

## 11.3 LEXICAL LINKS BETWEEN SOUTH ARABIAN AND YEMENI DIALECTS

### 11.3.1 FUNCTION WORDS AND PARTICLES

A large number of function words, including particles, adverbs and prepositions, are shared between either Ancient or Modern South Arabian and Yemeni dialects, with some sharing exhibited further afield with North African dialects.

Cognates of *ḡayr* are attested in most, if not all, Arabic dialects in the sense of ‘apart from, except’ (Procházka 1993: 219; Naïm 2009: 153–4 for Ṣanʿāni). In Mehri and Yemeni Arabic dialects generally,<sup>9</sup> cognates of *ḡayr* (*ḡar*, *ār*) have the additional, and in these more common, sense of ‘only, just; but’. Examples include:

- (30) (a) Ṣanʿāni:  
*anā ḡar gult*  
 ‘I **only** said’  
*jit ḡar tiʿarras*  
 ‘She came **only** to celebrate a wedding’ (Piamenta 1990–1: 363)
- (31) (b) Yemeni Mehri (Mahriyōt):  
*ār wallah man ldāʿ*  
 ‘**But**, by God, I don’t know’
- (32) (c) Omani Mehri (Mehreyyet):  
*w-dōmah ykūn ār bi-ṣḡayr snay lyēk*  
 ‘That used to be **only** in the mountains in the past’

*ṣī* functions as an existential, predominantly in negative clauses, and in questions and conditionals (cf. Wilmsen 2013). It also expresses ‘either ... or’ and ‘some’. It is attested in these senses in Yemeni Arabic, Modern South Arabian, and Gulf Arabic (for the latter, cf. Holes 2016: 109–13).

- (33) (a) Yemeni Mehri (Mahriyōt):  
*hīn nukʿam ṣī amṭāl ka-ḥbunyān ḥāyām lyōm*  
 ‘If these days a **few** proverbs occur to us when we are with our children’  
 (Sima 2005)

<sup>9</sup> Also common in this sense in North African dialects, including Moroccan (Harrell and Sobelman 2006) and Ḥassāniya (Heath 2004: 177). We can assume a Yemeni connection here, since Yemenis were a significant part of the Islamic armies which conquered North Africa.

- (b) Omani/Yemeni Mehri:  
*šī m-bōh w-šī m-bōh*  
 ‘Some here, some there’  
*šī fšē*  
 ‘Is there **any** lunch?’
- (34) (c) Ṣan‘āni:  
*šī yawm šī yawmayn*  
 ‘Either one or two days’  
*šī xubz*  
 ‘Is there **any** bread?’
- (35) (d) Rāziḥīt:  
*mā kān ḡō bē šī brāk wi-hih*  
 ‘Weren’t there **any** water cisterns at all?’

#### Prepositions:

- (36) Rāziḥīt and Faiḥi: *bū* ‘in’ = Mehri *bi-*, ASA *b-* (Beeston 1984: 54)
- (37) Rāziḥīt: *si* ~ *sa* ‘to’, *siwān* ‘towards where’ = ASA *s<sup>1</sup>n*, *s<sup>1</sup>nn*, *s<sup>1</sup>wn*, *s<sup>3</sup>n*, *bs<sup>3</sup>n* (Beeston 1984: 58; Sima 2001: 256)<sup>10</sup>
- (38) *farrēna sā hūd am-dirāḡ w-n-nās kullām farrū sī ṭall*  
 ‘We escaped **to** Hūd am-Dirāj and everyone else escaped **to** there’ (Watson et al. 2006b)
- (39) *sīwān farrēkum*  
 ‘Where did you (mpl) escape **to**?’ (Watson et al. 2006b)
- (40) Rāziḥīt: *aṭar* ‘after’, cf. Mahriyōt: *aṭṭār*; Mehreyyet: *ṭār*; Šherēt: *ṭer*.

#### Adverbs:

- (41) Mehri: *sēhal* ‘a little’, cf. general Yemeni *sahl* ‘don’t worry!’
- (42) Yemeni Arabic, Mehri, Šherēt: *fīsa* ‘quickly’<sup>11</sup>
- (43) ASA, Rāziḥīt: *yōm*, *ywm/ym* ‘when’ (cf. Beeston 1984)

#### 11.3.1.1 Negation: ‘no’

The word for ‘no’ in most Semitic languages is *l*-based. Late Sabaic (Stein 2003: 239), Ḥimyaritic (Robin 1991: 107), and several Yemeni dialects spoken in the Ḥugariyyah and in the south-west corner of Yemen exhibit a *d*-based particle—Sabaic *d<sup>o</sup>*, Ḥimyaritic *daw*, and *daw*, *da<sup>o</sup>*, *duwwayy*, and *andaw* in Yemeni dialects of the Ḥugariyyah today (cf. Behnstedt 1985: 170; Müller 2010: 151).

<sup>10</sup> Also attested in Maltese (Procházka 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Reflexes of this adverb are also attested in several North African dialects.

## 11.3.1.2 Future particles

In a note to her study of future particles in Arabic dialects, Taine-Cheikh (2004) proposes to extend the research to include future particles in other Hamito-Semitic languages; she mentions the future particle *med* in Hobyot, but not its use outside the MSALs. We are now aware of Arabic reflexes of \**mayd* either side of the Yemeni–Saudi border.<sup>12</sup> There are slight syntactic and semantic inter-variety differences in the use of this form. In Hobyot and eastern Yemeni Mehri, Mahriyōt, *mad* (*med* in Hobyot) may stand alone or take a following pronoun suffix followed by a verb in the subjunctive. In Rāziḥīt, *mēd* takes what appears to be the definite article (*im-mēd*) followed by a verb, noun, or pronoun, while in Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup> *mēd* takes a following noun or verb. In questions, (*im-*)*mēd* may stand phrase-finally in both Rāziḥīt and Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>. In semantic terms, Hobyōt *med* and Mehri *mad* function mainly as a future particle with possible volitional overtones, whereas Rāziḥīt and Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup> *mēd* functions as a future/volitional particle. Consider these examples:

- (44) (a) Hobyōt: *med~med+/-* pron suffix + subjunctive verb  
*mēd-as tətīk ḥmō*  
 ‘She **will** drink water’  
*mēd yəntāwḥən*  
 ‘They **will** fight one another’ (Simeone-Senelle 2011)
- (45) (b) Mahriyōt: *mad +/-* pron suffix + subjunctive verb  
*mad yaḥmal sfēr lā*  
 ‘He **won’t** cope with the travel’  
*madī laḡyibās hōk*  
 ‘I **will** leave it (f) for you’  
*hīn mad yaxlaṭḥ ḥirēz w-dēḡar*  
 ‘If one **wants** to mix it (m) with rice’
- (46) (c) Rāziḥīt: *im-mēd* + verb/noun/pron  
*lā māni m-mēd aḡid baḡa‘ah*  
 ‘No, I don’t **want** to go to Baḡa‘ah’  
*wallāh im-mēd yillḡag yišār‘ōh lō kkōh bū maḡlis al-‘amin*  
 ‘He would **want** to follow him to sue him even if it brought him to the Security Council’ (Watson et al. 2006b)
- (47) (d) Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>: *mēd* + noun/verb  
*anā mēd im-xitāb*  
 ‘I **want** the book’  
*anā mēd amšī*  
 ‘I **want** to go’  
*mantah mēd*  
 ‘What do you (msng) **want?**’ (Yahya Asiri p.c.)

<sup>12</sup> Also noted by Ingham (1994a: 184) for Najdi Arabic in the sense of ‘rather’ and described as being ‘a particle of very illusive meaning’.

In other Yemeni varieties, reflexes of \**mayd* are also attested, but lack the sense of future/volition found in Hobyōt, Mehri, Rāziḥīt, and Rijāl Almaʿ. Consider here: Abha – *gāl mēdi* ‘he said to me’ (Yahya Asiri, p.c.) and Ṣanʿānī – ʿ*alā mayd* ‘because of’.

### 11.3.2 BASIC LEXIS

Rossi (1940) had already recognized the wealth of South Arabian terms in Yemeni dialects, particularly rich in the traditional semantic fields of architecture and agriculture. A recent paper by Müller (2014) reviews Sabaic lexical survivals in Yemeni Arabic, and shows over one hundred terms in the fields of geographic features, agriculture, irrigation, architecture, building materials, cultural history, and local foodstuffs. Behnstedt (1997b) draws our attention to the fact that for terms relating to parts of the body correspondence between northern Arabic and Yemeni dialects is between 30% and 60%. The correspondence for terms relating to the face between the two related, but distinctly separate, languages German and English is around 40%. The question to be asked here is, is there a certain correspondence percentage below which we can no longer describe two varieties as dialects of a single language?

In addition to the many shared ecological, architectural and agricultural terms noted by Behnstedt (1987b, 1997b), Rijāl Almaʿ has the reflex *bir* for ‘son’ and *ibrah* for ‘daughter’, with realization of /r/ in the sng but not in the pl, as in Mehri, Šherēt (and Aramaic). Consider the following examples:

(48) Mehri: *bar/bart* ‘son of/daughter of’, *ḥabrī* ‘my son’ (pl *ḥbūn* ‘sons’, *ḥbantan* ‘daughters’)

(49) Šherēt: *ibri* ‘my son’ (pl *īni* ‘my sons’); *ibriti* ‘my daughter’ (pl *ōnti* ‘my daughters’)

(50) Rijāl Almaʿ: *bir/ibrah* ‘son/daughter’ (pl *banāh* ‘daughters’)

Shared agricultural terms include:

(51) Mehri (Mahriyōt), Šherēt, Rijāl Almaʿ, Faifi: *lē* ‘cow’; Minabbih: *lāy(in)*; Khashir: *lāy* (Behnstedt 1987a, 1987b)

(52) Rijāl Almaʿ: *šāriyah*; Mehri: *šarrayt* ‘animal hard to milk’ (cf. Johnstone 1987)

(53) Mehri: *šxōf* ‘milk’, *šxāf* ‘to drink milk’; Rijāl Almaʿ: *šaxaf* ‘to drink quickly’<sup>13</sup>

### 11.4 SYNTACTIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SOUTH ARABIAN AND YEMENI DIALECTS

In this section, I discuss syntactic similarities between South Arabian and Yemeni dialects. Here I discuss agreement in relative clauses in Rijāl Almaʿ, Modern South Arabian, and Sabaic, and the construction: subject+*fā-/hā-*+participle in Rāziḥīt.

<sup>13</sup> The root /š-x-f/ may be onomatopoeic, reflecting the noise made by milk as it hits the milk pail during milking, and the slurping noise made by someone who drinks hastily.

11.4.1 RELATIVE CLAUSES IN RIJĀL ALMA<sup>s</sup>

One of the few generally consistent differences between OA and Modern Arabic dialects which has, until recently, not been countered is the fact that while in CLA the relative marker agrees with the head noun in number and gender (and, in the dual, in case), the relative marker in Modern Arabic dialects has a single indeclinable form—usually *illi* (cf. Ferguson 1978 [1959]; Retsö 1992: 8). In Sabaic, alongside the indeclinable *ḏ*-mentioned in §11.2.1, there is a more common relative marker (in bold in the following examples) that agrees in number and gender with the antecedent, as in:

- (58) (a) <sup>ʔ</sup>*wdn*/<sup>ʔ</sup>*lys*<sup>1</sup>*ṭrn* SAB375/1<sup>14</sup>  
 ‘the lines of the inscription’ (Beeston 1962: 50)  
 (b) *br*<sup>ʔ</sup>*w-hgb*<sup>ʔ</sup> *b*<sup>ʔ</sup>*r-hw* *t-š*<sup>c</sup>*bm* (MAFRAY-Sāri<sup>c</sup>6/3)  
 ‘(...) has built and restored his well made out of Š<sup>c</sup>BM’ (Stein 2003: 146)

In some of the MSALs, the singular relative marker based on *ḏ*- or *d*- is distinguished from a plural *l*-based form, as in Šherēt (*iž* < \**il*). Note that the singular relative marker in Šherēt has a common alternative form *ε*- (Rubin 2014: 68):

- (59) *ūt ḏ-ēdīdi* ~ *ūt ε-dīdi* ‘my uncle’s house’ versus *ēt iž eyo* ‘the people’s houses’

In Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>, the relative marker always agrees in number and gender with the antecedent and, for three of the forms, appears to have the same reflexes as for late Sabaic.<sup>15</sup> Compare Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup> *ḏā* (msng), *tā* (fsng), *wulā* (human pl), and *mā* (inanimate pl) (Asiri 2007) with forms presented by Stein (2003: 150) in his summary table of the development of relative pronouns from early to late Sabaic (Table 11.1).

Alongside the number-/gender-sensitive relative marker, observe that, unless functioning as a genitival attribute, a singular anaphoric pronoun is always absent, and a plural anaphoric pronoun mainly absent, in definite relative clauses in Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>. This holds not only for where the head noun of the main clause functions as

TABLE 11.1 Sabaic relative pronouns

	msng	fsng	nominative mpl	oblique mpl	fpl
Early Sab	<i>ḏ</i> -	<i>ḏt</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>l</i>		<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>lt</i>
Middle Sab	<i>ḏ</i> -	<i>ḏt</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>lw</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>ly</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>lt</i>
Late Sab	<i>ḏ</i> -	<i>t</i> -	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>lht</i> ( <sup>ʔ</sup> <i>lt</i> )		

<sup>14</sup> <sup>ʔ</sup>*ly* is the plural relative agreeing with <sup>ʔ</sup>*wdn*.

<sup>15</sup> Prochazka (1988b: 46) mentions for Abha and al-Šahrā a relative that distinguishes number and gender, with the forms *dā* msng, *tā* fsng, and *illi* com pl. He does not mention an inanimate plural form, and, in contrast to Rijāl Alma<sup>s</sup>, his examples show anaphoric verbal subject markers in the relative clause – *ir-raġġāl dā ġā* <sup>ʔ</sup>*ams mariḏ* ‘the man who came yesterday is ill’, *il-mara tā ġat* <sup>ʔ</sup>*ams mariḏah* ‘the woman who came yesterday is ill’, and *in-nās illi ġaw* <sup>ʔ</sup>*ams marḏān* ‘the people who came yesterday are ill.’ He also observes that the invariant relative *illi* is rapidly replacing the gender-/number-sensitive relative.

an adverb in the relative clause, as in *Ṣanʿāni al-yawm alladī ġīt* ‘the day I came’, or where it functions as the verbal object or independent pronoun, as noted for Moroccan dialects (Elomari 1998), Ḥassāniyya (Taine-Cheikh 2007: 248), and some other dialects of Arabic (e.g. Damascus, Fischer, and Jastrow 1980: 85), but also for the verbal subject markers. Always in the singular, and mostly in the plural, the default 3msng form of the verb is used in case the subject of the relative clause and the antecedent are co-referential:

- (60) (a) *antah rayta m-walad dā šarad*  
 you saw the-boy rel ran away-3msng  
 ‘Have you seen the boy who ran away?’  
 (b) *antah rayta m-brat tā šarad*  
 you saw the-girl rel ran away-3msng  
 ‘Have you seen the girl who ran away?’  
 (c) *gābalt im-brat tā lisa yasmaʿ*  
 met-I the-girl rel neg 3msng-hear  
 ‘I met the girl who can’t hear’  
 (d) *gābalt im-ʿuwāl wulā sarag/u m-maḥall*  
 met-I the-boys rel stole/-3pl (from) the-shop  
 ‘I met the boys who stole from the shop’  
 (e) *im-maḥāll mā bana/ha*  
 the-houses rel built-3msng/them  
 ‘The houses that he built’ (Asiri 2007, 2008)

This lack of anaphoric pronoun is also attested on occasions in Sabaic: the anaphoric pronoun, unless the genitival attribute of a substantive, is often absent (from the examples given, apparently in both definite and indefinite relative clauses):

- (61) (a) *s¹b²t/s¹b²w*  
 ‘Expeditions which they (m) made’  
 (b) *ʔfrs¹m/d-hrgw*  
 ‘Horses which they slaughtered’ (Beeston 1984: 43)

#### 11.4.2 SUBJECT+*fā-/hā-*+ACTIVE PARTICIPLE IN RĀZIḤĪT

As discussed during a presentation in 2005 (Glover Stalls et al. 2005), Rāziḥīt expresses continuous aspect through *fā-/fa-/hā-* + active participle. The following examples are taken from the texts published in Watson et al. 2006b:

- (62) (a) *dī kānic fā-hābillā-h iṣ-ṣubih*  
 this aux-you.f fa-tell.ap-it the-morning  
 ‘The one (f) you (fsng) were telling this morning’  
 (b) *yarān dīyyah ʿalī ʔaḥmad fā-dāʿ li-ṣālīh*  
 look this Ali Ahmed fa-shout. ap to-Salih  
 ‘Look, there’s Ali Ahmad shouting for Salih!’

Noting that *hā-* has the sense of ‘in’ in dialects spoken both in the Ḥugariyyah and in Banī Minabbih (Behnstedt 1987b: 218), an area to the north of Jabal Rāziḥ, we initially suggested *fā-* here to be a reflex of the preposition *fī* ‘in’. This construction thus appeared to be reminiscent of those found in other, unrelated, languages in which a preposition expressing the sense of ‘in’ precedes an uninflected verb form to express the continuous—as in modern English *he was a’ singing and a’ dancing*, where *a’*, according to Collins Dictionary, has the sense of ‘in’, and contemporary dialectal German *ich bin am Lesen* ‘I am reading’. In a recent conversation, however, Peter Stein (p.c.) pointed to the similarity between the Rāziḥī construction Subject+ *fā-/hā-* + active participle and the Subject + *f-* + Predicate (usually Nomen+ *f-* + Verb form) construction, in which *f-* comes between a fronted element and a verb, a construction well attested in Sabaic, but only rarely seen in Arabic (Nebes 1995).<sup>16</sup>

### 11.5 WORD STRESS AND PROSODIC LINKS

In the previous section, we have seen remnants of South Arabian segmental phonology, morphology, lexis, and syntax in Arabic dialects. Here I suggest tentatively that a puzzle of word stress in certain Arabic dialects may be due to influence from the Modern South Arabian language, Mehri.

Arabic word stress is based primarily on syllable weight, with syllables categorized as light CV, heavy CVV, or CVC, and superheavy CVVC or CVCC. The majority of eastern dialects of Arabic exhibit trochaic stress, whereby stress is placed on a final superheavy syllable if there is one, as in *ka’tabt* ‘I/you (msng) wrote’, and *šā’būn* ‘soap’, otherwise on the rightmost heavy syllable, as in *mak’tabna* ‘our office’, *Šan’ānī* ‘maktabah’ ‘library’, and *mu’sāfir* ‘traveller’, and in the absence of any heavy syllable in the word on the initial or antepenultimate light syllable, as in Cairene *ḍarabit* ‘she hit’, *Šan’ānī* ‘nisiyat’ ‘she forgot’. Cairene differs from dialects such as *Šan’ānī* in that stress is placed on the penultimate light syllable where the antepenultimate is heavy, as in *mak’tabah* ‘library’.

The one regular exception to these stress rules in several Arabic dialects throughout the Arab world, including Cairene, Bani-Hassan (Jordan), Jewish Baghdadi, Meccan, and Tunisian, occurs where the 3fsng s-stem verb takes a vowel-initial suffix. In this case, stress is placed on the vowel of the 3fsng inflectional morpheme irrespective of the weight of adjacent syllables. Thus Cairene *ḍarabu* ‘they hit’ and *katabu* ‘they wrote’ contrast with *ra’mitu* ‘she hit him’, *ba’nitū* ‘she built it (msng)’, and *ša’fitu* ‘she saw him’, which all have the same CVCVCV structure. Similar lexicalized stress of the 3fsng inflectional morpheme has also been reported for

<sup>16</sup> The construction *ʔammā...fa-* in Arabic is not comparable to Sabaic NOMEN/PRÄPOSITIONALAUSSDRUCK +F-+VERBFORM (Nebes 1995: 260, 184): in contrast to the Sabaic construction, Arabic *ʔammā...fa-* is a topic–comment construction in which the isolation of the topic from the comment is reflected prosodically in that the two components constitute separate intonation phrases, and semantically in that a conditional-like relationship exists between the two components. In addition, the element following *ʔammā* has sentence-like characteristics, whereas the element preceding *f-* in Sabaic has phrasal characteristics.

Šaʿdah (e.g. *dara'biteh* 'she hit him', Behnstedt 1987b), Jewish Baghdad (e.g. *fat'ḥatu* 'she opened it'), Bani-Hassan (e.g. *ʕalla'mato* 'she taught him', Irshied and Kenstowicz 1984), and Meccan (e.g. *gata'latu* 'she killed him', Ingham 1971). In northern Yemeni Rāziḥit (Watson et al. 2006a), Jabal Wuṣāb and Qaryat al-Hasīnah (Behnstedt 1985: 122) and several northern African dialects, the /t/ of the 3fsg inflectional morpheme is geminated on suffixation, as in Algerian *ḍar'bət* 'she hit' > *ḍar'battək* 'she hit you (msng)', thus making the stressed syllable heavy (CVC). Gemination of /t/ in these dialects can possibly be analysed as a response to lexical stress of the suffixed morpheme.

The stress of the 3fsg inflectional morpheme, particularly in relation to Cairene and Tunisian, has exercised researchers of word stress and metrical phonology for many years, and various solutions have been proposed: for Tunisian, Angoujard (1990) assigns an indestructible rhyme to the syllable of the 3fsg morpheme; for Cairene, Watson (2002) proposes a lexically specified reversal of foot assignment; and for Jordanian Bani-Hassan, Irshied and Kenstowicz (1984) posit an uneven trochee. In all cases, however, stress is assigned exceptionally according to the identity of the morpheme if and only if that morpheme takes a pronoun suffix, and not on the basis of syllable weight.

Recent work on the prosody of Mehri suggests that this word stress puzzle may have resulted from contact with speakers of Modern South Arabian. Mehri assigns word stress according to syllable weight to the following base forms: imperfect verbs with subject inflectional affixes, perfect verbs with 3rd-person subject inflectional suffixes, unmarked nouns or nouns with gender/number suffixes, and unmarked adjectives or adjectives with gender/number suffixes. For such words, the stress algorithm for Mehri reads as follows (data from my fieldwork on Omani Mehri, cf. also Watson and al-Mahri, forthcoming):

- (63) (a) Stress a final superheavy syllable (CVVC or CVCC), as in: *āfa'rūt* 'red (fsng)', *ḥay'bit* '(the) camel (f)', *šan'yūt* 'she saw', *a'bark* 'the knee', *ṭī'wōl* 'long (mpl)'
- (b) In the absence of a final superheavy syllable, stress the penultimate heavy (CVV or CVC) syllable, as in: *ḥōwar* 'black (msng)', *šīni* 'he/they (f) saw', *š'xawwal* 'sit (msng)!', *rī'ḥamtan* 'beautiful (fpl)', *ḥā'dūtan* 'hands'
- (c) In the unusual absence of a heavy syllable, resulting from non-realization of \*ʕ as C<sub>3</sub>, stress the initial light syllable, as in Mehreyyet: *'nakak* 'I/you (msng) came', *'himak* 'I/you (msng) saw'

On obj suffixation to the 3msng/3fpl perfect verb or certain prepositions, the stem takes a different template and the suffix is stressed according to the weight of the syllable:

- (64) (a) Verbs: *w'zūm* 'he/they (f) gave' > *wuz'miham* 'he/they (f) gave them', *wuz'mis* 'he/they (f) gave her'
- (b) Prepositions: *f'nōhan* 'before; in front of' > *fan'wis* 'before; in front of her', *sār* 'behind' > *s'rūk* 'behind you (msng)', *bark* 'in' > *bar'kiham* 'among them (m)'

Further suffixation to these stems, however, fails to induce stress shift from the originally stressed syllable irrespective of the weight of the stressed syllable or



adjacent syllables. Thus, when *ḥa'būn* ‘children’, *ḥā'dūtan* ‘hands’ take a pl poss suffix, the original stressed syllable is subject to pre-suffix shortening. However, the originally stressed syllable retains stress despite the following long vowel of the suffix: *ḥa'binīham* ‘their (m) children’, *ḥā'ditikan* ‘your (fpl) hands’. Similarly the preposition *n'xālī* ‘under’ is realized on suffixation as *n'xālisan* ‘under them (f)’, *n'xaliham* ‘under them (m)’.

Perfect verbs, with the exception of the 3fsng inflection, take stress on the same syllable as the unmarked 3msng/3fpl inflection, as in *'watxaf* ‘he came in the evening’ > *'watxaḥk* ‘I/you (msng) came in the evening’, *'watxaḥkam* ‘you (mpl) came in the evening’; *'ṣatūk* (< \**'ṣatwaḥ* ‘he longed’) > *'ṣatūḥak* ‘I/you (msng) longed’, *'ṣatuḥkam* ‘you (mpl) longed’; *'ḡatyat* ‘he became angry’ > *'ḡatīḥak* ‘I/you (msng) became angry’ (cf. Watson 2012).

Verbs inflected for 3fsng in the perfect take stress on the final (superheavy) CVVC syllable, as in: *wuz'mūt* ‘she gave’, *kata'būt* ‘she wrote’, *watxa'fūt* ‘she came in the evening’. On suffixation of an object pronoun, the vowel of the 3fsng morpheme is subject to the pre-suffix shortening, as described, and realized as [a]. Stress remains on the shortened pre-suffix syllable, irrespective of the weight of this and adjacent syllables. Thus, *śan'yūt* ‘she saw’ > *śan'yatan* ‘she saw us’, *śan'yats* ‘she saw her’; *wuz'mūt* ‘she gave’ > *wuz'matan* ‘she gave us’, *wuz'matkam* ‘she gave you (mpl)’; *nkōt* ‘she came’ > *n'katian* ‘she came to us’, etc.

It is generally assumed that with the Islamic conquests tribes moved north and west from the Peninsula, as evidenced by shared basic lexical items among Arabic dialects of portions of the Peninsula and North Africa (B&W 2005). We know that several basic lexical items are shared between Modern South Arabian and diverse Arabic dialects, some of which have been mentioned. My hypothesis in terms of the Arabic 3fsng stress puzzle is that the frequent occurrence of 3fsng + suffix and the similarity in realization between the [at] of the Mehri suffixed 3fsng morpheme and the [at] or [it] of the Arabic suffixed 3fsng morpheme led to adoption of this lexicalized stress pattern in the Arabic dialects with which Mehri came into contact, notably those eventually ‘exported’ to Egypt and North Africa. In Mehri, assignment of stress to the syllable of the 3fsng morpheme is predicted by the syllable of the morpheme’s being stressed prior to suffixation; in affected Arabic dialects, however, the syllable of the 3fsng morpheme is stressed obliquely only on pronoun suffixation and thus a stress rule that is predictable from rules of word stress at different morphological levels in Mehri has become lexicalized in these Arabic dialects.

## 11.6 CONCLUSIONS

Similarities between language varieties may be due to several factors: chance (including similar lifestyle), language contact, or direct or common inheritance. An example of chance-induced similarity due to shared lifestyle may well be the use of different verbs in the sense of ‘to go’, depending on the time of day the ‘goer’ sets out. A lifestyle dependent on early rising for specific household or trading tasks and on the position of the sun is likely to result in a set of time-specific verbs, perhaps with

the sense of the task attached. Thus, Rāziḥīt *barrah* has the original specific sense of ‘to collect firewood [early in the morning]’.

Non-assimilatory phonological processes, including pre-pausal glottalization and assignment of stress to the 3fsg s-stem/perfect ending on suffixation are more likely to be due to language contact. Although pre-pausal devoicing is very common in the world’s languages, pre-pausal glottalization is not: it is attested in Thai, in certain English dialects, and as a major phonetic feature in the south-west of the Arabian Peninsula (Watson and Asiri 2007, 2008; Watson and Bellem 2011). In other Arabic dialects in which it occurs—parts of Middle and Lower Egypt, parts of the Levant and Anatolia—glottalization affects a very limited set of domain-final segments (mainly /ʕ/ and final vowels).

However, it is in the inheritance-related similarities that we may see evidence of descendants of South Arabian; these will be reflected in a combination of a common basic lexicon, including prepositions and particles, common morphemes, exclusively shared syntactic constructions, and common agreement patterns in the syntax; they may also be shown in shared phonological processes—such as the productive total assimilation of /n/ to a following non-guttural consonant in Rāziḥīt, in Sabaic, and historically in MSALs, a process which is both rare in languages of the world and unattested in other varieties described as Arabic.

In this chapter, I have considered a selection of phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic features shared between Ancient and Modern South Arabian, what has been described as Ḥimyaritic, Yemeni Arabic dialects, and Arabic dialects spoken further afield. The Yemeni varieties discussed in this chapter have changed drastically within the lifetime of contemporary speakers: the lateral affricate reflex of *ḏād* is now a phonological memory among Rāziḥīt speakers, and while it is realized as an emphatic lateral sonorant or emphatic lateralized fricative in the speech of older speakers in Rijāl Almaʕ and Al-Rubūʕah, recent fieldwork showed that speakers under the age of thirty appear to have replaced the lateral(ized) reflex by an emphatic non-lateralized interdental fricative. Furthermore, while older speakers in certain dialects within northern Yemen, Rijāl Almaʕ, and Al-Rubūʕah maintain a contrast between \*ḏ and \*ḏ̤, younger speakers appear to have collapsed any distinction between these two sounds. Perhaps even more salient are changes observed in the syntax of Rijāl Almaʕ, where young people have abandoned the gender-/number-sensitive relative marker in favour of invariable *illi*. Significantly, the use of *illi* goes hand in hand with the adoption of pan-regional syntax, lexemes, and morphemes: the examples show the package of features that accompany use of *illi*—the anaphoric pronoun in the definite relative clause, the definite article (for Rijāl Almaʕ *im-*) realized as *il-*, the 3fsg s-stem inflection (for Rijāl Almaʕ *-an*) realized as *-at*, and pan-regional lexemes replacing dialect-specific lexemes (in these examples, *ant* ‘you (msng)’ in place of *antah*, *šif-t* ‘you (msng)’ in place of *rayt*, *bint* ‘girl’ in place of (*i*) *brah*, *fawg* ‘upstairs’ in place of *ʕilayn*), e.g.

- (65) (a) *ant*      *šift is-sayyārah*    *illi ʕaddat*  
           you.m    saw the-car        rel passed-3fsg  
           ‘Have you (msng) seen the car that passed?’

- (b) *samaʿt al-bint illi tamšī fawg*  
heard-I the-girl rel 3fsng-pass upstairs  
'I have heard the girl who is walking upstairs' (Asiri 2008)

In a paper entitled 'Arabic dialectology: The state of the art', Jastrow (2002) deplores the current academic trend of retreating from the world of living languages to 'a kind of global chatroom' and the abandonment of fieldwork. What we most need, he writes, is what is least likely to be carried out—namely extensive fieldwork in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, particularly in ʿAsīr, Najrān, and Tihāma. The data discussed in this chapter only underscore the urgency of Jastrow's call. The more we learn about these varieties, the more urgent the need appears as it becomes ever clearer how important the data are and how quickly salient features are disappearing. Alongside continued advances in the study of ASA, timely research into varieties spoken in northern Yemen and southern ʿAsīr may continue to unearth linguistic features we thought had long since died out and, perhaps, provide us with sufficient information to demonstrate with some degree of certainty that Arabic did not, as is so frequently assumed, totally displace the original languages of the Peninsula.

# Glossary

This glossary is not exhaustive, and contains only the most important and frequently occurring linguistic, historical, and cultural terms in the text. It is intended primarily for readers who are not familiar with the Arabic language and its descriptive nomenclature or with the history, geography, and culture of the Arabic-speaking world.

The terms are grouped in five categories:

1. *Linguistic terms*
2. *Languages*
3. *Non-linguistic Arabic terms*
4. *Historical, geographical, and cultural terms (in the senses used in this book)*
5. *Personalia*

## 1 Linguistic Terms

**adnominal linker** (see also *tanwīn*): in some, mainly ‘bedouin’, modern Arabic dialects, and more extensively in older dialects of all types, an enclitic *-in* (in some dialects *-an*) is attached to an indefinite noun when it is modified by an attributive adjective, e.g. *bint-in zēna* ‘a nice girl’, or certain other types of adjunct, e.g. *ḥarr-in yišbih il-ḡamra* ‘summer heat like hot coals’. In a few dialects, principally those of Najd, the enclitic may also be affixed to the attributive adjective, e.g. *b’ir-in ‘ōd-in* ‘a large male camel’. This so-called adnominal linker is now optional in all the dialects where it occurs, and is more favoured in some text types (generally ‘formulaic’ ones such as riddles and dialect poetry) than in others, but there is evidence (see Ferrando, this volume) that it may have been a virtually obligatory feature of some Arabic dialects in medieval times.

**alif maqṣūra** (lit. ‘shortened alif’): term for an orthographic convention whereby a final *ā* (pronounced short in pause) in certain categories of word is written with a dotless *yāʾ* (y).

**annexation**: see *idāfa*.

**apophonic passive**: ‘apophonic’ passives are formed by applying an internal vowel template to the verb stem rather than by attaching a prefix or infix to it. In **pattern I verbs** (q.v.), the commonest category to which this template is applied in the dialects, the **s-stem** (q.v.) passive typically has a high vowel/ vowels in contrast to the low vowel/ vowels of the active verb, e.g. (Gulf examples) *xalag* ‘he created’, *xilig* ‘he/it was created’, *ḡāl* ‘he said’, *ḡil* ‘it was said’. The equivalent prefixed forms are (Gulf, with *in-* prefix) *inxalag* and *ingāl*, (Cairene, with *it-* prefix) *itxalaʾ* and *itʾāl*. The apophonic passive is normal in CLA/MSA, but has disappeared from the vast majority, but not quite all, of the Arabic dialects as a productive form, to be replaced by an affixed form, generally the *in-* or *it-* prefix, but an infixed *-t-* also occurs in some verb roots in some dialects, e.g. (Bahrain) *bāg* ‘he stole’, *ibtāg* ‘it was stolen’.

**‘bedouin’ (dialects)**: a group of geographically widely dispersed Arabic dialects with certain common linguistic features, notably a voiced reflex, usually /g/, of OA /q/ and the interdental

series of consonants /t̪, d̪, ɖ/. ‘Bedouin’ dialects, as the name suggests, are spoken by tribal communities from north-west Africa to the Arabian Peninsula which until the relatively recent past led a life of seasonal migrations and pastoral nomadism. However, virtually all such groups, wherever they live, are now fully sedentarized, though they often still retain their ‘bedouin’ dialects in modified form.

**broken plural:** plurals formed by regular changes to the internal vowel pattern of the singular noun and in some cases the addition of consonants, e.g. (Damascene) *zərr* ‘button’ pl *zrār*; *kaff* ‘glove’ pl *kfūf*; *dawla* ‘nation, state’ pl *duwal*; (Gulf) *rafīḡ* ‘friend, companion’ pl *rifḡān*.

**bukara-syndrome:** the insertion of a vowel, in slow speech, between a consonant (C) and an immediately following /r/ (plain or velarized) at syllable boundaries, the phonetic quality of which depends on the consonantal environment, e.g. *bukra* → *bukaṛa* ‘tomorrow’; *ḥamra* → *ḥamara* ‘red’ (fsng); *bizriḥ* → *bizirih* ‘seed’. The *bukara*-syndrome is found in the dialects of Middle Egypt and some ‘bedouin’ dialects of Sinai. It tends to disappear in allegro speech.

**construct state:** see *idāfa*.

**diptote:** in CLA/MSA, a noun declension whose members, when indefinite, never have *tanwīn* (q.v.): they have *-u* in the independent (‘nominative’) case, and *-a* in the dependent (‘accusative’) and oblique (‘genitive’) cases. When definite they have the full **triptotic** (q.v.) set of case markers *-u*, *-a*, *-i*.

**dual number:** in CLA/MSA dual number is a fully functioning morphological category in all parts of speech—verbs, nouns, adjectives, and pronouns of all kinds—and dual forms are inflected for mood and case. In the dialects, the dual does not exist anywhere as a category of the verb, adjective, or pronoun. In the noun, in the dialects of the eastern Arab World, it can be applied to virtually all common nouns by suffixation of *-ēn* or *-ayn*, e.g. (Gulf examples) *bētēn* ‘two houses’, *sayyārtēn* ‘two cars’, *bintēn* ‘two girls’, and is generally treated as a plural in terms of its agreement e.g. *bētēn kbār* ‘two large houses’. But in many other dialects (e.g. those of Morocco) the dual ending is applied only to a closed class of nouns of measurement, e.g. ‘hundred’, ‘hour’, ‘month’, ‘ounce’, ‘hand-span’.

**elative:** the comparative/ superlative form of the adjective, e.g. *kabīr* ‘big, old, great’ *akbar* ‘bigger/biggest’.

**‘emphatic’ (or ‘emphatized’/ ‘velarized’) consonants:** a set of phonemes that contrast with their ‘plain’ equivalents in being velarized, and conventionally marked in transliteration by a subscript dot. In CLA, these are /ṣ/, /ṭ/, /ḍ/ and /ḡ/. In all modern Arabic dialects /ṣ/ and /ṭ/ are found, but in almost all the distinction between /ḡ/ and /ḡ̣/ has collapsed and either /ḡ/ or /ḡ̣/ is used to the exclusion of the other: ‘sedentary’ dialects (q.v.) generally have /ḡ/, ‘bedouin’ ones (q.v.) /ḡ̣/. Other consonants often undergo secondary velarization in certain environments, especially the liquids /l/ and /r/ and the labial series /b/, /m/, and /f/. This is usually (but not exclusively) due to the presence of one of the ‘primary’ emphatics in the same or a contiguous syllable in the same word.

**gahawa- (and ghawa-) syndrome:** a phenomenon which occurs in some ‘bedouin’ dialects of the eastern Arab World. A rule of /a/-insertion affects non-final closed syllables of the general form CaC# if the C following /a/ is one of the back spirants (often termed the ‘gutturals’) /x, ɣ, ħ, ʕ, h/. Thus *gahwa* → *gāhawa* ‘coffee’, *baḥr* → *bāḥar* ‘sea’. In some dialects, such as those of Najd and eastern Arabia, a further rule of vowel-deletion reduces any resulting series of short

vowels and shifts the stress, i.e. CvCvCv → CCvCv, so, e.g. (Bahraini examples) gáhwa → (gahawa)→ gháwa ‘coffee’, yáhla→ (yahala) → yhála ‘large water pot’, mágrīb→ (mağarīb) → mğárib/ mğárīb ‘sun-set’, yá‘rif → (ya‘aríf) → y‘árf/ y‘árf ‘he knows’.

**gilit** (or **gelet**) vs **qaltu** dialects: these are short-hand ways (*gilit* and *qaltu* both mean ‘I said’) of referring to the principal division of the Arabic dialects of Iraq and some areas of Syria and Turkey. *gilit* dialects constitute the main group of ‘bedouin’-type dialects in this area, while *qaltu* dialects are those of the ‘sedentary’ type, which include all those of the Christians and, until most of them left Iraq in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Jews.

**hāl** (clause): a clause of ‘attendant circumstance’, which generally follows the main clause in both CLA/MSA and in the dialects, but in some dialects (notably Cairene) often precedes it. Examples (Gulf Arabic, *hāl* clauses in bold): *š-tilbas wa hiyya tamši fi š-šārī?* ‘What was she wearing as she walked down the street?’ (lit. ‘... and she was walking...’); *harab abū-yu ba‘ad-na ġihhāl* ‘My father ran off when we were still children’ (lit. ‘... and we (were) still...’).

**hamza**: the glottal stop, which in CLA/MSA is a fully functioning consonant (see immediately below), but has largely disappeared from the dialects, to be replaced by a glide (/w/ or /y/), or by vowel length (ā, ī, or ū), or by total loss, depending on its position in the word and the vowels which historically occurred before and after it.

**hamzatu al-qaṭʿ**: in CLA/MSA, the ‘separating’ *hamza* as opposed to *hamzatu al-waṣl* (q.v.), the ‘joining’ *hamza*. The ‘separating’ *hamza* is a stable consonant which can occur in any position in the word, initially, e.g. *ʔab* ‘father’, medially, e.g. *raʔs* ‘head’, or finally *ġuzʔ* ‘part’ and is never elided. It has largely been lost in the dialects.

**hamzatu al-waṣl**: in CLA/MSA, the ‘joining’ *hamza* is found only word-initially in a limited range of forms and contexts: on a few nouns such as *ʔibn* ‘son’, on the definite article *ʔal-* ‘the’, and in certain types of imperative form, e.g. *ʔuktub!* ‘write!’ When not in absolutely utterance-initial position it is elided, so, e.g. *li-bnī* ‘for my son’, *bi l-* ‘in the...’, *fa-ktub!* ‘so write!’ It is a noticeable hypercorrect feature of oral MSA that speakers sometimes treat *hamzat al-waṣl* as if it were *hamzat al-qaṭʿ*, inserting it unpredictably and incorrectly according to the rules of CLA/MSA, e.g. *li ʔibnī*, *bi ʔal-*, *fa ʔuktub!*

**idāfa** (Ar. term for **annexation**, or **construct state**): in CLA/MSA this is the normal way of expressing a genitival relationship between two nouns, equivalent to English noun phrases such as ‘the key of the door’, ‘the girl’s name’, ‘a workman’s wage’. The ‘possessed’ noun—in the examples given, the Arabic words for ‘key’, ‘name’, ‘wage’—is placed before the ‘possessor’ without any linking preposition. The phrase is made definite either (a) by prefixing the definite article to ‘the possessor’, e.g. *miṭṭāḥ al-bayt* ‘the key of the house’/ ‘the house-key’ or (b) if the possessor is a proper name, and therefore conventionally definite, by simple juxtaposition, e.g. *miṭṭāḥ Aḥmad* ‘Aḥmad’s key’. If the possessor is an indefinite noun, the whole phrase is indefinite, e.g. *miṭṭāḥ bayt* ‘a key of a house’/ ‘a house-key’. Several other types of semantic relationship besides ‘possession’ are expressed by the *idāfa* construction: ‘identity’, e.g. ‘the city of Damascus’; ‘quantitative’, e.g. ‘a bunch of grapes’; ‘partitive’, e.g. ‘the vanguard of the revolution’; ‘agent’, e.g. ‘the arrival of the king’; ‘object’, e.g. ‘the execution of the criminal’. In dialectal Arabic, this *synthetic* construction of noun juxtaposition has largely given way in some types of semantic relationship to an analytical one, which links the nouns with a genitive particle (= ‘of’, ‘belonging to’, ‘for’, etc) which varies from one region to another: *dyāl*, *mtāʿ*, *ntāʿ* (N. Africa), *btāʿ* (Egypt), *tabāʿ* (Levant), *māl* and *ħagg* (Iraq, the Gulf) being the commonest.

**imāla:** an Arabic phonological term which originally described (as early as the eighth century) the fronting and raising of *ā* to *ī* in certain contexts in speech. In modern descriptions, it is also used to denote the raising and fronting of short *a* to *e* and even *i*. The phonological detail and scope of *imāla* differ in the modern Arabic dialects: some do not have it at all (many Gulf dialects), but it is normal in others (many Iraqi and Levantine dialects). Where it occurs, it is especially likely with final *-a* if not in contiguity with **emphatized consonants** (q.v.) or back spirants ('gutturals'), e.g. *madrase* < *madrasa* 'school', *ḥilwi* < *ḥalwa* 'sweet' (f), *šaʿbi* < *šaʿba* 'difficult' (f), but *ḍarṭa* 'a fart'. In medial position, *ā* → *ē* or *ī* where the adjacent syllable contains 'historic' *i* or *ī*, is typical, e.g. (Iraqi **qaltu** dialects (q.v.)) *klīb* (< *kilāb*) 'dogs', *sakēkīn* or *sakikīn* (< *sakākīn*) 'knives', *ḡimīʿ* or *ḡēmīʿ* (< *ḡāmīʿ*) 'Friday mosque'.

**imperfect/ imperfective/ non past or p(= prefix)-stem of the verb:** as with the s(=suffix)-stem, the descriptor 'p-stem', refers to a morphological fact: that the 'p-stem' verb has *inflectional prefixes* which mark person and gender (as well as, in some persons of the verb, suffixes which mark number, gender, and, in CLA/ MSA, mood). The 'p-stem' verb is generally used to describe present and future events and states (hence 'non-past') which are also by definition incomplete (hence 'imperfect' or 'imperfective'), but it can also be used, in an already-established past-time context, for the 'continuous' and 'habitual' past, e.g. 'I was X-ing when ...' 'I used to X'. Some example forms (from CLA/MSA, all with suffixes marking indicative mood): *a-ktub-u* 'I write/ am writing/ shall write/ was writing/ used to write, etc.', *ta-ktub-u* 'you (msng) write' etc., *ta-ktub-īna* 'you (fsng) write', *ya-ktub-u* 'he writes', *ya-ktub-ūna* 'they (mpl) write'.

**īʿrāb:** this term refers to the desinential inflectional **systems** of CLA/MSA which mark case in the noun (independent/ dependent/ oblique, or nominative/ accusative/ genitive in more traditional terminology, respectively) and mood (indicative/ subjunctive/ jussive) in the imperfect/ **p-stem** (q.v.) verb. These case- and mood-markings have totally disappeared from the modern Arabic dialects, though some occur sporadically in 'mixed' registers of educated speech. See also *tanwīn*.

**k-perfect (and k-dialects):** in almost all varieties of Arabic, the 1sng and 2nd-person consonant-initial inflections which are suffixed to the **s-stem/ perfect/ perfective** (q.v.) verb begin with a *t*, e.g. in CLA/MSA *-tu*, *-ta*, *-ti* for 1sng, 2msng, 2fsng respectively. But in some dialects of Yemeni Arabic, the equivalent inflections begin with a *k*. This unusual feature is known as the *k-perfect*, and is thought to be substrate survival in the Arabic dialects which have it from an extinct South Arabian Semitic language, **Himyaritic** (q.v.). Perhaps significantly, all the extant neighbouring **Modern South Arabian Languages** (q.v.), which may be historically related to Himyaritic, also have this feature.

**karšūnī (or garšūnī):** term for Arabic written in the Syriac script in the period when Arabic first spread as a spoken language in the Fertile Crescent (seventh century AD).

**kaškaša:** the exact meaning of this term, which occurs in the earliest indigenous accounts of Arabic grammar, is unclear, but in all probability it originally referred to the affrication, in certain Arabian tribal dialects, of *k* to *č* in the 2fsng enclitic pronoun when it occurred in utterance-final position. In the present day, an affricated 2fsng enclitic pronoun *-č* (or *-ts*) is still found in many dialects of central, northern, and eastern Arabia and southern Iraq. In those dialects which have it, there is also a general affrication of *k* to *-č* or *-ts* wherever it occurs in the proximity of a front, and especially a front high, vowel, which is also sometimes referred to as *kaškaša*, e.g. (Gulf examples) *čam* 'how much?', *bičir* 'first-born child', *hādīč* 'this (f)'.



**lahn:** ‘solecism’, a word often encountered in the phrase *lahn al-‘āmma* ‘the solecisms of the common people’, the generic name for a type of prescriptive medieval grammatical treatise describing and correcting the mistakes which ordinary people typically made in their spoken and written Arabic.

**mater lectionis:** in Arabic orthography, the convention of writing the long vowels *ā*, *ī*, and *ū* using the consonant letters *alif*, *yāʾ*, and *wāw* respectively, the corresponding short vowels being written only as diacritical signs but in practice being omitted from all writing except the text of the Qurʾān. When the Arabic script was adapted to write other languages (e.g. Persian, Urdu) these consonant letters were often used as *matres lectionis* to write all or most vowels, whether they were long or short.

**nisba(h)** adjective: *nisba* (or *nisbah*) means ‘relation’, and a *nisba* adjective, which involves the addition of the suffix *-iyy* (also written *-īy*) to a noun, has the sense of ‘of’, ‘from’, or ‘appertaining to’ the noun from which it is formed, e.g. *miṣr* ‘Egypt’, *miṣriyy* ‘Egyptian’.

**patterns I, II, ... X of the verb:** the main characteristic of the derivational morphology of the Arabic verb is the use of augments—prefixes, infixes, radical gemination, vowel-lengthening, and combinations of these—to modify the basic sense of the unaugmented tri-radical **perfect/perfective/s-stem verb** (q.v.). The resulting augmented stems are known as patterns (or themes). In CLA/MSA, the basic stem (‘pattern I’) of the s-stem verb is CaCvC-; pattern II is CaCCaC-; III CāCaC-; IV ʾaCCaC-; V taCaCCaC-; VI taCāCaC-; VII inCaCaC-; VIII iCtaCaC-; IX iCCaCC-; X istaCCaC-. There are five more little-used patterns (XI–XV), and a large class of quadrilaterals of the form CaCCaC- (where C<sub>2</sub> and C<sub>3</sub> are different), which also has augments. The augmented patterns modify the sense of the basic stem often in predictable ways, e.g. in CLA/MSA pattern II is often causative but can in some verbs be intensive; VII passive; X reflexive, benefactive, or ascriptive, etc. A similar system is used in the dialects, but some of the CLA/MSA patterns occur rarely or not at all in them (e.g. patterns IV and IX), and some dialectal patterns do not occur at all in CLA/MSA (e.g. itCaCaC- in Egypt, CōCaC- in the Gulf), and the semantic value of some patterns has changed in some verb roots as between CLA/MSA and the dialects.

**perfect/perfective/past or s(= suffix)-stem verb:** the citation form of the Arabic verb is not the infinitive, but the 3msng of the perfect, also often termed the perfective/past/s-stem verb. Examples of the basic pattern I s-stem verb, which has the general form CaCvCa ‘he X-ed’, are *kataba* ‘he wrote/has written’, *labisa* ‘he wore, put on’, *kabura* ‘he grew old’, in which the verb stem is CaCvC-. To this stem are added inflectional suffixes which specify person, number, and gender, e.g. *katab-tu* ‘I wrote’, *katab-ta* ‘you (msng) wrote’, *katab-ti* ‘you (fsng) wrote’, etc. The s-stem is also often termed the ‘perfect’, ‘perfective’, or ‘past’, because perfect aspect and/or past tense are its commonest values. However, it has other values which are less appropriately described by these terms (e.g. the optative), so the neutral morphological term ‘s-stem’ is now often used to refer to it (and is the default reference in this book).

**p-stem:** see **imperfect**.

**s-stem:** see **perfect**.

**‘sedentary’ (dialects):** cf. **‘bedouin’** (Ar. *badawī*) (dialects), of which the ‘sedentary’ (Ar. *ḥaḍarī*) dialects are the antithesis—the dialects of city-dwellers and villagers who do not, and did not historically, ever pursue a life of pastoral nomadism. The ‘sedentary’ dialects are a very varied group but have certain basic shared characteristics; most notably, in contrast to the ‘bedouin’



dialects, a voiceless reflex of OA /q/, which may be /q/, /k/ or /ʔ/: /q/ is typical of many north Iraqi dialects, of sedentary populations in Oman and southern Yemen, and of Andalusian Arabic and some of the oldest Maghrebi dialects—all of them geographically peripheral; /k/ is probably the least common reflex, and typical of some areas of rural Palestine and some Gulf dialects (Baḥārna villagers, and some parts of inner Oman); /ʔ/ is the quintessentially urban reflex, and typical of the dialects of large Middle Eastern cities such as Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Beirut.

*šinšinna*: this is one of many seemingly onomatopoeic terms (such as *kaškaša*, q.v.) used by the early Arab grammarians as labels for various dialectal peculiarities of the Arab tribes of their time, but of which they often give conflicting descriptions or no proper description at all, beyond statements like ‘*šinšinna* is found in the speech of tribe X’. It is likely that *šinšinna*, which the medieval grammarians described as a feature of the speech of southern Arabia, refers to the dialectal reflex *-(i)š* (= the letter *šin*) of the 2fsng pronoun enclitic, e.g. *bēt-iš* ‘your (f) house’, common to this day in most of Yemen, almost all of Oman, parts of the UAE, and some communities in eastern Arabia, in contrast to *kaškaša*, which most likely referred to the equivalent *-č* or *-ts* (*bēt-ič*, *bēt-its*) reflex of the ‘bedouin’ dialects of northern and most of eastern Arabia.

**sound plural**: in contrast to the **broken plural** (q.v.) the sound plural involves adding a suffix to the singular form of the noun, rather than applying a different vowel template to it. The nouns which form their plurals by adding the *m* suffix (in CLA/MSA *-ūna* / *-īna*, depending on case) overwhelmingly denote rational beings, e.g. *mudarris-ūna* ‘teachers’, *mustahlik-ūna* ‘consumers’, but there are a few ancient exceptions, e.g. ‘*ālam-ūna* ‘worlds’. The *f* suffix, *-āt*, is added to many nouns denoting female rational beings, e.g. *mudarris-āt* ‘female teachers’, *ṭālib-āt* ‘female students’ but is also applied to a large category of nouns whose singular is marked as feminine by *tāʔ marbūṭa* (q.v.), e.g. *šarika* ‘company’ → *šarikāt* ‘companies’ and also many foreign borrowings, e.g. *bāš* ‘bus’ → *bāšāt* ‘buses’. In the dialects, the sound plural is simply either *-in* (*m*) or *-āt* (*f*), case-related variants having been lost (if they were ever there).

*tāʔ marbūṭa*: this term, literally ‘tied *t*’, refers to the *-ah* ending on a large class of nouns which marks their *f* gender when in pause, but which in juncture becomes *-at*, e.g. *šarikah* ‘company’, but *šarikatu n-niṭ* ‘the oil company’. The final letter of such words is written in Arabic as an *h*, but with two dots placed above it, like the regular Arabic letter *t*. This unique orthographic convention indicates the dual phonological value of the *f* ending: *h* in pause and *t* in juncture. When transliterating, many scholars nowadays spell such nouns without the final *-h* when it is in pause, viz. *šarika*. Words in the class which have *tāʔ marbūṭa* generally behave in the dialects in pause/ juncture in the same way as they do in CLA/MSA.

*taltala*: an ancient feature exhibited by certain ancient tribal dialects of central, eastern, and northern Arabia (Rabin 1951: 61) whereby the prefix vowel of the *p*-stem (imperfect) verb was *i* rather than *a* as in CLA, e.g. *yismaʿ* ‘he hears’ vs CLA *yasmaʿ*.

*tanwīn*: the literal meaning of this term is ‘nūnation’, i.e. ‘the adding of an *-n*’. *Tanwīn* is one of the key morphosyntactic features of CLA/MSA. It marks indefiniteness in several very large categories of noun and adjective (the ‘**triptotes**’ (q.v.)), in both singular and plural, and has three case-determined forms, *-un* (independent), *-an* (dependent), and *-in* (oblique). None of these is written as part of the consonantal skeleton of the word, but as diacritics; but since

diacritics are not normally written, except in the Qurʾān, they are usually invisible. However, *-an* is (in most but not all cases) additionally marked with an orthographic *alif* after its diacritic, whether that diacritic is written or not (the so-called *alif tanwīn*) and so appears in writing. The CLA/MSA system of *tanwīn* has totally disappeared from the dialects (if it ever even existed in them) except in borrowings from MSA in certain limited categories, such as adverbs formed with the dependent case marker *-an*, e.g. *maṭal-an* ‘for example’, *ṭabʿ-an* ‘naturally, of course’, *qaṣd-an* ‘deliberately’. There is, however, a quite different form of dialectal *tanwīn* (see **adnominal linker**), which the evidence suggests is ancient and involves the optional suffixing of an invariable suffix (most often *-in*) to *any* indefinite noun regardless of case, and regardless of whether in CLA this noun was in a category that took CLA *tanwīn* or not. It remains to be demonstrated what the historical relationship was, if any, between these two systems of *tanwīn*.

**triptote**: in CLA/MSA, a noun declension (the largest) whose members have the full tripartite marking of case whether the noun is definite or indefinite viz. definite: *-u* (independent), *-a* (dependent), and *-i* (oblique); indefinite: *-un*, *-an*, *-in* respectively.

## 2 Languages

**Ancient (or Old) South Arabian (ASA)** (or **Ṣayḥadic**): a group of four extinct ancient Semitic languages once spoken in what is now Yemen: **Qatabanian** (q.v.), **Sabaeen** (or **Sabaic**) (q.v.), **Minæan** (q.v.), and **Ḥaḍramitic**. It is thought by some scholars that there is a Sabaic substrate in some modern Yemeni Arabic dialects.

**Aramaic**: a widely spoken ancient Semitic language of the Near East, the lingua franca of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (911–605 BC), the Neo-Babylonian Empire (605–539 BC), and the Achaemenid Empire (539–323 BC), of the Neo-Assyrian states of Assur, Adiabene, Osroene, and Hatra, the Aramean state of Palmyra, and Judaea (539 BC–AD 70). Aramaic continued to be spoken in Mesopotamia and the Near East for many centuries after the Arab/Islamic conquests, and neo-Aramaic survives in a few enclaves in the Fertile Crescent to the present day. Some scholars consider that there is an old Aramaic substrate in many of the ‘sedentary’ Arabic dialects of the Levant, Iraq, and neighbouring areas.

**Akkadian**: cover term for a number of ancient East Semitic dialects which evolved in the three millennia BC. The main division was between the Assyrian dialects of the Middle Tigris region of present-day Iraq, and the Babylonian dialects of the south. Akkadian was gradually replaced in the same geographical space by **Aramaic** (q.v.), the latest Akkadian cuneiform tablet dating to c.AD 100. Some Babylonian Akkadian lexical elements appear to have been borrowed or are substrate elements in the coastal Arabic dialects of eastern Arabia.

**Bambara**: the lingua franca of Mali, 80% of whose population speak it as first or second language. Languages of the same group (Manding) are spoken in neighbouring countries of West Africa.

**Classical Arabic (CLA)**, Ar. *al-luġa l-ʿarabiyya l-fuṣṣḥā* ‘the pure Arabic language’: the variety of Arabic first codified and described by the eighth-century Arab grammarians of southern Iraq, especially one of its earliest representatives **Sibawaih** (d. 793) (q.v.) in his *Kitāb* (‘Book’), and based mainly on the language of pre-Islamic Arabian poetry, the Qurʾān, and the usage of contemporary bedouin informants whose language was judged ‘pure’.

**Coptic:** a northern Afro-asiatic language spoken in Egypt from the second to around the early fourteenth century AD (though it is claimed that it survived as late as approximately the seventeenth century AD in a few scattered pockets), after which it ceased to be a spoken vernacular for anyone but continued to be used as the liturgical language of the Coptic Church.

**Ethio-Semitic:** cover term for the Semitic languages of Ethiopia and Eritrea, now thought to be members of a South Semitic group of languages, which also includes the MSALs (q.v.) of southern Arabia. The Ethio-Semitic languages are: Geʿez, the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church; Amharic, the principal language of modern Ethiopia; Tigré, a language of north-western Eritrea and Sudan; Tigrinya, or Tigrāi, of northern Ethiopia and central Eritrea; Argobba; Harari; and the Gurage group of languages.

**Ḥarsūsi:** one of the Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs), related to **Mehri** (q.v.). Ḥarsūsi is spoken in the Jiddat al-Ḥarāsīs, a flat area of desert and stony steppe to the north-east of Ṣalāla in south-central Oman. There may be no more than a few hundred speakers left, all of whom are bilingual in Ḥarsūsi and Omani Arabic.

**Ḥimyaritic:** a pre- and post-Islamic Semitic language or dialect of south-western Arabia of which we have no detailed description, claimed to be unintelligible to Arabic speakers at the time when it was extant. It is still unclear whether it was a language separate from Arabic, and what its relationship was with its predecessor Sabaic. According to contemporary reports, it was still spoken in some areas of the Yemeni highlands in the tenth century AD. Some contemporary Yemeni Arabic dialects preserve substrate elements of Ḥimyaritic/ Sabaic, notably the so-called *k-perfect* (q.v.), unusual negative particles, and the *an-/ am-* form of the definite article, among others.

**Hōbyōt:** one of the smallest of the **Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs)** (q.v.), spoken in the coastal region either side of the Omani–Yemeni border.

**Kanuri:** language of the Nilo-Saharan group spoken by about four million people in the Saharan **Sahel** (q.v.) region in northern Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad.

**Maltese:** the national language of Malta, which is in essence a North African dialect of Arabic which was cut off from influence from ‘heartland’ Arabic-speaking areas from around the mid-eleventh century, and has been heavily influenced over the last ten centuries by Romance languages (especially Italian), and more recently by English. It is the only form of Arabic normally written in the Roman alphabet.

**Mandaic:** an ancient variety of Eastern Aramaic spoken in pre-Islamic times in southern Iraq and in the area around Ahvaz in the southern Iranian (but now largely Arabic-speaking) province of Khūzistān.

**Mehri:** the largest of the **MSALs** (q.v.). There are two dialects: Yemeni Mehri, known as Mahriyōt, and Omani Mehri, known as Mehreyyet. Both have been heavily influenced by Arabic.

**Middle Arabic (MA):** a cover term originally used for a spectrum of varieties of medieval non-Classical written Arabic used in documents and some forms of literature from about the ninth century AD. Middle Arabic displays many non-Classical features in its morphology, syntax, and vocabulary, and separate medieval Jewish and Christian varieties can be distinguished. The term was originally coined to denote what was conceived of as a chronological stage in the evolution of Arabic, but it has ceased to be thought of in these terms since about the late 1990s and is used nowadays, along with the alternative locution ‘Mixed Arabic’, to denote distinctively substandard styles of written Arabic of any period.

**Minaean:** one of the **Ancient South Arabian** (q.v.) languages. It was spoken in north-eastern Yemen between c.1200 BC and AD 100.

**Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs):** a group of Semitic non-Arabic languages spoken in an area which straddles the Yemen–Oman border and extends eastwards up the Omani Indian Ocean coastline, and also on the Yemeni island of Soqatra. These languages are, in order of the size of the populations who speak them natively: **Mehri** (q.v.), which is by far the largest, **Šherēt** (or **Jibbālī**) (q.v.), the next biggest, and **Ḥarsūsī**, **Höbyöt**, **Baḥārī**, and **Soqotri**, all of which have only tiny numbers of speakers.

**Modern Standard Arabic (MSA):** the modern form of **Classical Arabic (CLA)**, used throughout the Arab World, which shares the same phonology (in so far as the phonology of CLA is known), morphology, and grammar, but is much changed in its lexicon. Modern Standard Arabic is not the native speech of (i.e. is not learnt naturally by) any Arab, but is the language of all formal written communication in the modern Arab World, and of formal ‘set-piece’ scripted speech. Knowledge of it is acquired through the formal education system.

**Old Arabic (OA):** a cover term, used in this book to refer to reconstructed varieties of pre- and early Islamic spoken Arabic of which we have little reliable direct knowledge and which were the ancestors of the modern dialects. Old Arabic forms are by no means always identical with the **Classical Arabic** (q.v.) forms described by the early Arab grammarians.

**Proto-Semitic:** the supposed proto-language which is the ancestor of all the attested Semitic languages. Its geographical origin is uncertain: a Levantine and an African origin have both been proposed, and a time period of c.3750 to 3500 BC. It is no longer believed that the origin of Proto-Semitic was Arabia.

**Qatabanian:** one of the four extinct **Ancient South Arabian languages** (q.v.) of what is now Yemen.

**Rāziḥī:** language spoken in **Jabal Rāziḥ** (q.v.), whose status is uncertain: it may be a dialect of Yemeni Arabic or a separate language descended from one of the **Ancient South Arabian languages** (q.v.) with a Yemeni Arabic adstrate.

**Sabaic:** one of the four extinct **Ancient South Arabian languages** (q.v.) of what is now Yemen.

**Šherēt** (also known as **Jibbālī**): one of the **Modern South Arabian Languages (MSALs)**. It is spoken in the mountains and coastal plain to the east of Ṣalāla in Dhofār, southern Oman, and is closely related to **Mehri** (q.v.).

**Songhai:** Nilo-Saharan language spoken by c.700,000 speakers in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Dahomey, and Nigeria. It borrowed many words from Arabic and was the vehicle for their spread into other West African languages.

**Soninke:** a language of the Mande group spoken by the Soninke people. It is widely spoken in Mali, Senegal, and Mauritania, and understood in other parts of West Africa.

**Sumerian:** an ancient agglutinative language with no known relatives, spoken in southern Iraq, and attested in its written form in cuneiform tablets dating from 3100 to 100 BC, with most surviving tablets dating from 2500 to 1500 BC. It probably ceased to be a spoken language some time between 2000 and 1500 BC. There was considerable reciprocal borrowing between Sumerian and **Akkadian** (q.v.) from as early as the first half of the third millennium BC, and some loans from Sumerian to Akkadian passed into Arabic.

**Syriac:** a form of **Aramaic** written in its own script, the vehicle of Syriac Christianity and literature in Iraq and the Fertile Crescent from about the third century AD (though it existed as a separate form of Aramaic from about the second century BC). It remains the liturgical language of the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Syriac Catholic Church, and the Maronite Church to the present day.

**Tarifit:** Berber language spoken (alongside Arabic) in the north-eastern Moroccan Rif ('country-side') up to the Algerian border, i.e. the areas in and around Tangiers, Tetouan, al-Hoceima, Nador, and Oujda.

**Tashelhit:** the most important Berber language of Morocco, with about four million speakers. It is spoken in the western part of the High Atlas and the regions to the south, up to and including the **Draa** River (q.v.), and including the Anti-Atlas and the basin of the Sous River. The largest concentrations of Tashelhit speakers are in the coastal city of Agadir and in Guelmim, Taroudant, Oulad Teima, Tiznit, and Ouarzazate.

**Tamazight:** cover term for a group of closely related North African Berber dialects spoken by large populations in Algeria and Morocco, and by smaller ones in Libya, Tunisia, northern Mali, western and northern Niger, northern Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and the Siwa Oasis of Egypt.

**Ugaritic:** a dead Semitic language discovered in 1929, and known only through writings found in the ruined city of Ugarit (hence the name) which is modern Ras Shamra in Syria. The language is attested in texts dating from the fourteenth to the twelfth century BC. The city of Ugarit was destroyed in c.1180 BC.

**Wolof:** language used in Mauritania and in the region more generally as a lingua franca at various periods in its history.

**Zenāga:** a Berber language once widely spoken in Mauritania and Senegal but now virtually extinct (c.200–300 speakers). 'Zenāga' seems to be a corruption of **Ṣanhāja** (q.v.), the name of a once large and important medieval Berber tribe of north and north-west Africa.

### 3 Non-linguistic Arabic Terms

**baṭn** pl **buṭūn**, lit. 'stomach', but in bedouin parlance 'offspring': clan or section of a bedouin tribe.

**biḍān** lit. 'whites': an ethnonym which in Mauritania denotes a paler skin colour than that of the **sūdān** 'blacks' of sub-Saharan West Africa, and generally equates to the term 'Moors'.

**dīwān:** a register or set of records of any kind, e.g. *dīwān al-ğund* 'register of soldiery', *dīwān al-kharāğ* '(land) tax registry'. The word is also used for a poet's 'collected works'.

**faxd** pl **afxād** (or **foxūd**) lit. 'thigh': subdivision of a bedouin tribe.

**ḥādīt** pl **aḥādīt:** the 'sayings' of the Prophet Muḥammad, collected, authenticated, and compiled into volumes for reference.

**ḥağğ:** the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

**ḥarṭāni:** in north-west Africa, a manumitted slave or a descendant of the original inhabitants of the Saharan oases, employed to till the soil.

**iggīw** pl **iggāwān** 'griots': in Mauritania, traditional musician-courtiers to the warrior class.

*iqṭāʿ*: fief (i.e. a grant of land) to a bedouin tribe settling in the conquered territories, e.g. of Egypt.  
*ḡund*: Muslim soldiery.

*kharāḡ*: originally a land tax, though the term came to be applied to tax more generally.

*luḡa*, lit. 'language', but also (in Arabic lexicographical parlance) 'dialectal peculiarity' of a particular tribe.

*madrasa*: institute of learning where Islamic law and religious sciences were taught.

*maḏhab* pl *maḏāhib*: term for one of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence, of which Sunni Islam recognizes four: Mālikī, Ḥanafī, Shāfiʿī, Ḥanbalī, each named after its founder.

*mʿallmīn*: in Mauritania 'master crafters' (lit. 'teachers').

*mulattamūn*: 'veiled ones', a reference to the eleventh-century nomadic Lamtūna, a Ṣanhāja Berber tribe of the Western Sahara, whose political dynasty was known to Europe as the Almoravids (q.v.).

*murtabaʿāt*: spring pastures of the bedouin (in Egypt).

*mustaʿriba*: term in early Islam for northern Arabs (who were considered by the genealogists not to be of true Arab descent) passing themselves off as of south Arabian and therefore 'purer' origin.

*muwašṣaḥ*, lit. 'girdled': form of stanzaic Arabic poetry developed in Andalusia at the end of the ninth century, whose language is CLA in the body of the poem but with a mixture of Romance and Arabic vernacular elements in the *kharḡa*, its final part.

*qabila* pl *qabāʾil*: tribe.

*qibla*: the direction of prayer (Mecca).

*raʾīs al-baḥr*: head of the navy or admiral of the fleet.

*raḡaz*: the name of a metre in Arabic poetry considered to be of inferior status. The basis of it is the di-iambic foot (short-long, short-long) though there are a number of variants.

*sēḥ*: in Oman, the flat, narrow, cultivated coastal strip bounded by the Ḥajar mountains to the west and the Gulf of Oman to the east, into which the mountain river valleys of the Bāṭina coast debouch.

*šarḥ*, lit. 'explanation': word-by-word Judaeo-Arabic gloss of a Hebrew text which generally could not be understood independently of the source text.

*ṭabaqāt*: in Arabo-Islamic culture, classificatory biographical literature which describes the lives and deeds of prominent men.

*ṭariqa*: pl *ṭuruq*, lit. 'way' or 'path' (to divine reality). The word came to denote 'a Ṣūfī (q.v.) order'.

*ʿulamāʾ* (sng *ʿālim*), lit. 'knowers, scholars': class of Muslim religious scholars and a reference point for authoritative opinions on religious matters.

*wuḡūh*, lit. 'faces': notables, social and political elite.

*zaḡal* pl *azḡāl*: type of vernacular strophic poetry that acquired literary status in twelfth-century Andalusia.

*zāwya* pl *zawāya*: in North Africa, a meeting place for spiritual pursuits and religious instruction; a place where a *ṭariqa* (q.v.) meets. In Mauritanian society, the pl *zwāyā* denotes the 'scholar' class.

#### 4. Historical, Geographical, and Cultural Terms (in the senses used in this book)

ʿAbbāsids: major Islamic dynasty and Caliphate (AD750–1258) whose capital was Baghdad.

ʿAbd al-Qays: ancient eastern Arabian tribe from which today’s *Baḥārna* (q.v.) claim descent.

ʿAjam: Arabian Gulf nationals of Persian descent.

Aghlabids: North African dynasty, vassals of the ʿAbbāsids, which ruled Ifriqiya (q.v.) from AD 800 to AD 909.

ʿAlawī: Islamic sect, a branch of ‘Twelver’ Shiʿism, but with syncretistic elements; found mainly in Syria.

(Al-)Andalus: Muslim Spain (AD 711–1492), whose territory at the time of its greatest extent in the early eighth century included all of the Iberian Peninsula and some areas of south-western France.

Al-Ḥira: ancient city of south-central Iraq, situated on the Tigris, founded in pre-Islamic times. It was originally a military camp, which became the capital of the *Lakhmids* (q.v.).

Almohads (Ar. *al-muwahḥidūn*): Berber dynasty of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in North Africa and Spain, reformist in character, founded by Mahdī ibn Tūmart. The Almohads replaced the *Almoravids* (q.v.).

Almoravids (Ar. *al-murābiṭūn*): dynasty founded by the nomadic Berber-speaking *Ṣanhāja* (q.v.) which conquered North Africa and al-Andalus in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Āl Murra: a large bedouin tribe, whose tribal homeland covers southern Qatar, neighbouring areas of Saudi Arabia, and part of the UAE.

Al-Namir: pre-Islamic bedouin tribe, whose lands were located in the Middle Tigris region.

ʿAnaza: ancient bedouin tribe of Arabia, still extant.

ʿArab, Aʿrāb, ʿIrbān: the earliest attested senses of these terms are rather obscure (see chapter 1) but they all eventually came to mean ‘nomadic Arabic-speaking bedouin’. As elements in modern Egyptian place-names, they simply mean ‘men of...’, ‘people of...’. In the modern Gulf, ʿArab specifically designates Gulf nationals of bedouin tribal heritage (and who are all *Sunnīs* (q.v.)), as opposed to *Baḥārna* (q.v.) and ʿAjam (q.v.).

Asad: pre-Islamic bedouin tribe from the north of Arabia.

ʿAsīr: highland region of south-western Arabia which borders the Yemen.

Awlād, lit. ‘sons (of)’, as in *Awlād ʿAlī* ‘Sons of ʿAlī’: denotes an Arab tribe.

Ayyūbids: dynasty founded by *Ṣalāh ad-Dīn al-Ayyūbī* (q.v.) which ruled Egypt, Syria–Palestine, northern Mesopotamia, and Yemen from the late twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century.

Azd ʿUmān: pre-Islamic bedouin tribe whose lands were located in south-eastern Arabia, roughly where the UAE now is.

Bagirmi: Arabic-speaking area of north-eastern Nigeria bordering Chad and Cameroon, which has a distinctive Arabic dialect different from those which surround it.

*Baḥārna*: an ethnonym denoting Arabic-speaking Gulf nationals of non-tribal descent who are all ‘Twelver’ Shiʿa. The largest communities of *Baḥārna* are found in Bahrain (from which they take their name) and eastern Saudi Arabia, but groups of them exist in every Gulf state.

**Bahrain:** in modern parlance, an independent Arab kingdom consisting of a small archipelago off the east coast of central Saudi Arabia. In early medieval times, 'Bahrain' referred to the whole coast of eastern Arabia from roughly modern Kuwait down to the Qatar peninsula, including the present-day eponymous islands, and its capital was Ḥajar (or Khaṭṭ) on the Arabian mainland.

**Bait Kathīr:** bedouin tribe of southern Oman (Bait = 'House (sc. 'sons') of').

**Bakr ibn Wā'il:** pre-Islamic group of tribes of eastern, central, and northern Arabia related to the 'Abd al-Qays (q.v.).

**Banū, or Banī, or B. lit. 'sons (of)',** as in B. Kilāb, B. 'Ajlān, etc., denotes a tribe.

**Banī Ḥassān:** a once-nomadic group of Arab origin, one of the four subtribes of the **Banī Ma'qil** (q.v.) bedouin, who migrated in the eleventh century to the Maghreb with the **Banī Hilal** (q.v.) and **Banī Sulaym** (q.v.). They may be of Yemeni origin. They gave their name to **Ḥassāniyya** (q.v.), the distinctive 'bedouin' Arabic dialect of Mauritania.

**Banū or Banī Hilāl, adj Hilālī (q.v.), and Banū/ Banī Sulaym, adj Sulaymī:** a confederation of bedouin tribes from Najd, some of whom migrated to Egypt in the early eighth century. Around two centuries later, at the time of the **Carmathian** (q.v.) revolutionary movement in Bahrain, they participated in the pillage of Mecca (AD 930). After the fall of the Carmathians and the rise of the **Fāṭimids** (q.v.) to power in Egypt in the late tenth century, the Banī Hilāl were expelled to southern Egypt, whence, after causing more trouble, they were expelled for a second time, this time to the Maghreb, where the Fāṭimids used them to attack the **Ṣanhāja** (q.v.) **Almoravids** (q.v.) and take over **Ifriqiya** (q.v.).

**Banī Ma'qil:** major tribe of the north-western Maghreb, whose origin was probably Yemeni.

**Baṣra:** city in southern Iraq, the main base from which the armies which conquered Transoxania in the eighth century launched their campaigns.

**Beṭ Mazūnāye:** pre-Islamic Nestorian Christian 'Diocese of Mazūn (= Oman)', which covered the southern Gulf.

**Beṭ Qaṭrāye:** pre-Islamic Nestorian Christian 'Diocese of Qatar', which covered the northern Gulf.

**Bilād al-Sūdān, lit. 'the country of the blacks':** in Maghrebi parlance, Black Africa to the south of the Western Sahara.

**Bou-Saada:** town in south-eastern Algeria.

**Bukhāra:** town in modern Uzbekistan, conquered by the Arab armies in the early eighth century, in which an ancient Arabic dialect still survives, spoken by a handful of speakers.

**Ceuta (Ar. *sabta*):** ancient north Moroccan town, around 16 kilometres from Gibraltar, which had an important commercial role as a 'bridge-head' between the Mediterranean and the Saharan regions.

**Cilicia:** region of south-central Turkey (now known as Çukurova) which borders north-western Syria, and which contains a number of Arabic-speaking minorities.

**Copts (Ar. *qibṭ*):** the Christianized original population of Egypt, now entirely Arabic-speaking, descended from the ancient Egyptians.

**Daṭīnah:** an inland region of southern Yemen.



**Ḍofār:** southernmost province of the Sultanate of Oman, whose main city is Ṣalāla and which borders Yemen.

**Draa** (Ar. *darʿa*): name of Morocco's longest river and the valley and province through which it flows in southern Morocco. As well as Arabic, **Tashelhit** (q.v.), a Berber language, is spoken there.

**Fayyūm:** ancient and strategically important region of Middle Egypt, c.100 kilometres south-west of Cairo.

**Fāṭimids:** an Ismāʿīlī Shīʿa dynasty and caliphate that had its origin in North Africa and eventually spread east, conquering Egypt and founding Cairo as its capital in 969. At its height the caliphate included the whole of the North African coast and its hinterland, Egypt, Sicily, the Levant, and the Hijāz (q.v.). It fell to the Ayyūbids (q.v.) in 1171, and was incorporated into the ʿAbbāsīd caliphate (q.v.).

**Fezzān:** large mountainous area of desert in south-western Libya.

**Geniza:** repository for Hebrew and Judaeo-Arabic writings, including everyday documents such as letters, accounts, court records, deeds, contracts.

**Ghadames:** ancient Libyan oasis town on the border with Tunisia and Algeria, which was once an important point on a trans-Saharan trade route. Its language, Ghadamsi, is a variety of Berber.

**Griot,** see *iggāwən*: the traditional musicians-courtiers to the warrior class in Mauritanian society.

**Ḥaḍramawt:** a deep fertile valley with precipitous sides running west-east in south-eastern Yemen, parallel to the southern coast of Arabia, with a narrow coastal plain to its south and arid lands to the north which lead to the Empty Quarter. Its ancient metropolis was Shabwa.

**Hal-Pulaaren:** second largest ethnic group in Senegal after the Wolof.

(al)-Ḥasā: group of oasis towns in eastern Arabia, opposite the Baḥrain islands, with a large Shīʿa population; its major centres are al-Hufūf and al-Qaṭīf.

**Hashimite(s)** (Ar. *hāshimī*): *nisba* adjective (q.v.) of the Sharīfs (= descendants of the Prophet's grandson Ḥasan) of the Hijāz, who ruled Mecca and Medina from the tenth century until 1924 and provided the twentieth-century royal families of Syria, Iraq, and Jordan.

**Hatay:** southern Turkish province with an Arabic-speaking minority, bordering Syria. Its main cities are Antakya and Iskenderun.

**Hejaz** or **Hijāz** (Ar. *Ḥiǧāz* lit. 'barrier'): the north-western region of the Arabian Peninsula, in which Mecca and Medina are situated.

**Hilālī** and **pre-Hilālī** (dialects): the pre-Hilālī dialects of Arabic are those brought from the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa and Spain by the first wave of Arab migrants in the late seventh to the early eighth centuries; Hilālī dialects are those brought much later by a series of mass migrations of the **Banī Hilāl** and **Banī Sulaym** (qq.v.) from Upper Egypt to North Africa from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries.

**Ḥugariyyah/ Ḥujriyya:** well-cultivated mountainous region in the southern part of north Yemen. The Ḥujriyya tribe who live there claim to be descended from the ancient Ḥimyar (see *Ḥimyaritic*).

**Ḥwala:** community of Arab origin, originally mainly coastal traders, and all Sunnis, who migrated to the southern Persian coast at an indeterminate time in the past and were expelled

from there in the early twentieth century, returning to the Arab side of the Gulf. They count among their number many prominent contemporary merchant families of Bahrain and other Gulf States.

**Ibāḍi/ Ibāḍism:** one of the earliest Islamic sects, which takes its name from ‘Abd Allāh b. Ibāḍ. It is a branch of **Khārijism** (q.v.) and its adherents are mainly found today in Oman, Tripolitania (Jabal Nafūsa), and southern Algeria (**Mzāb** (q.v.)).

**Idrīsids:** dynasty which ruled Morocco from AD 788 to AD 974.

**Ifriqī pl Afāriqa**, lit. ‘African(s)’: post-Islamic conquest Arabic term for the Latin-speaking indigenous population of the central North Africa coast (**Ifriqiya**, q.v.) living mainly in towns.

**Ifriqiya:** in medieval Arab writings, part of the North African littoral, covering approximately today’s eastern Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania (western Libya).

**Iyād:** ancient Arab tribe which originated in the **Tihāma** (q.v.) but eventually made its way to Mesopotamia.

**Jabal Rāziḥ:** remote mountainous massif in north-western Yemen where **Rāziḥi** (q.v.) is spoken, a language which may be a relative of one of the **Ancient South Arabian** (q.v.) languages.

**Jazīra:** a low-lying plateau (with some mountains) which forms the northern part of Mesopotamia.

**Jbāla:** a region of northern Morocco which extends south from the Straits of Gibraltar to Taza, in which the main towns are Tetouan, Chefchaouen, Ouezzane, and Taounate.

**Karaite Jews:** movement which recognizes the Hebrew Bible alone as its supreme legal authority in Jewish religious law and theology, rejecting the written collections of the oral tradition in the Midrash or Talmud, because it sees them as non-binding.

**Khārijism:** the earliest sect of Islam (Ar. *xāriḡi* pl *xawāriḡ* lit. ‘those who go out’). The schism arose as a result of a disagreement concerning the basis for the Caliphal succession following the murder of the third Caliph, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.

**Khūzistān:** a province (capital Ahvāz) of south-western Iran which geographically more or less corresponds to ancient Elam. It has a large Arabic-speaking population as a result of bedouin migrations from Arabia, and before 1925 was popularly known as Arabistān.

**Kūfa** (Ar. *al-kūfa*): Iraqi city c.110 kilometres south of Baghdad on the Euphrates. It was founded *ex nihilo* in AD 638 as a military establishment to control southern Mesopotamia.

**Lakhmids:** a pre-Islamic dynasty of Iraq which lasted from c.AD 300 to AD 600 and whose capital was at **al-Ḥira** (q.v.).

**Lisān al-‘Arab**, lit. ‘the Tongue of the Arabs’: a famous thirteenth-century dictionary of Arabic compiled by Ibn Mandūḥ.

**Lower Egypt:** the northernmost region of Egypt, including Cairo and the Nile Delta.

**Madḥij:** ancient Yemeni tribe which had a considerable role in the early Islamic conquests, notably in Egypt. The tribe is still extant in modern Yemen.

**Maghreb** (Ar. *al-maḡrib*, lit. ‘the west, the place where the sun sets’): the western Arabic-speaking lands, consisting of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania (western Libya).

**Maiduguri:** large city of about two million people in north-eastern Nigeria, and capital of Borno State, whose population is predominantly Muslim.

**Mameluke** (Ar. *mamlūk* lit. 'slave'): name of the sultanate which ruled Egypt and Syria from AD 1250 to AD 1517, whose military caste were slaves of varied origins: Crimeans, Circassians, Abkhazians, Oghuz Turks, and Georgians.

**Manāma:** capital city and main town of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

**Mandaeans:** ancient non-Christian gnostic religious community (Aram. *manda* 'knowledge') living in southern Iraq /Iran, whose language was Mandaic, a variety of Eastern **Aramaic** (q.v.).

**Marāzīg:** bedouin tribe of southern Tunisia.

**Mārib:** name of a group of oases and a dam in pre-Islamic Yemen, c.135 kilometres east of Ṣanʿāʿ. In antiquity Mārib was the capital of the **Sabaeen/ Sabaic** (q.v.) realm. The dam was first built c.1700 BC, and periodically burst and was rebuilt. The final catastrophic burst (mentioned in the Qurʾān) occurred at the beginning of the seventh century AD. This event destroyed irrigation works and caused major population movements (c.50,000 people), notably eastwards to Oman, and even to regions as far away as Syria and Iraq.

**Marinids:** a Berber dynasty which ruled the western Maghreb from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century.

**Marsh Arabs** (Ar. *mīʿdān/maʿdān*): the indigenous population of the wetlands of the Euphrates Delta in southern Iraq, who speak a dialect of Iraqi Arabic and are all Shīʿa, apart from a few Aramaic-speaking **Mandaeans** (q.v.) who work as boat-builders and craftsmen.

**Mashreq** (Ar. *al-mašriq*, lit. 'the place where the sun rises'): the eastern Arabic-speaking lands comprising Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula.

**Mauritania Tingitana:** Roman province coinciding roughly with the northern part of present-day Morocco and the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Its capital city was the city of Tingis (Berber *Tingi*), which is the modern city of Tangier.

**Middle Egypt:** the land between the Nile Delta including Cairo (= Lower Egypt) in the north and the Ṣaʿīd (= Upper Egypt), which begins at Asyūt in the south.

**Morisco:** term applied to Spanish Muslims who were forcibly converted to Christianity between 1499 and 1526 and to their descendants, who continued to live in Spain until they were expelled between 1609 and 1614.

**Mzāb:** a region of the Algerian Sahara in which communities of **Ibāḍīs** (q.v.) began settling from the eleventh century. There are five main oasis towns, of which the largest is Ghardaia.

**Najd** (Ar. *naǧd* 'uplands'), adj **Najdi:** the central region of Arabia, mainly desert and steppe, but with some oases and agriculture. The area is home to many major bedouin tribes, such as the Muṭayr, Ḥarb, ʿUṭayba, Subayʿ, Dawāsir, ʿAwāzim. The ruling families of several Gulf States are originally of Najdi origin, as is a proportion of their population.

**Najrān:** an ancient city in south-western Arabia, on the border with Yemen, to which it belonged until the mid-1930s and the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In ancient times it was an agricultural and trade centre, being situated at the intersection of two major caravan routes, and it had important Jewish and Christian communities.

**Negev** (Ar. *al-naqḅ/ naǧb*): desert region of southern Palestine, now part of Israel, which adjoins the Sinai Peninsula. The earliest recorded bedouin tribes of the area were the Balī and

the Judhām, which participated in the conquest and arabization of Egypt. The major contemporary tribes are the Tarābīn and the Tiyāhā.

**Ottoman:** a Turkish dynasty, of Oghuz origin, which eventually ruled a large Eurasian empire (c.1280–1924) including Arabic-speaking lands (especially Egypt, Syria-Palestine, and Iraq).

**Qarmatians** (or Carmathians) (Ar. *qarmaṭī* pl *qarāmiṭa*): a ninth-to-tenth-century offshoot of the Ismāʿīlī Shīʿa, established by Ḥamdān Qarmaṭ, an Ismāʿīlī from near al-Kūfa (q.v.) in southern Iraq. They revolted against the ʿAbbāsīd Caliphate (q.v.) and set up a utopian republic in al-Bahrain (q.v.) and al-Ḥasā (q.v.) in AD 899, which lasted until 1078. Prayer, fasting, and other Muslim practices were abolished. They are infamous for their sacking of Mecca in 930 and the theft of the Black Stone.

**Qays:** a pre-Islamic tribe of eastern Arabia.

**Quḍāʿa:** a group of ancient Arab tribes which included Balī and Juhayna, whose tribal lands were in the north-west of the Arabian Peninsula. Tribes from the Quḍāʿa group, notably Balī, were involved in the conquest and settlement of Egypt.

**Quraysh:** the tribe of the Prophet Muḥammad, which was dominant in Mecca. There was a large immigration of Quraysh to Middle Egypt in the tenth century.

**Rabīʿah:** one of the two largest tribal confederations of northern Arabia (the other being Muḍar).

**Reconquista:** the ‘Reconquest’ of Spain, a period of wars spanning more than seven centuries and completed in 1492, in which the armies of various Christian Spanish kingdoms recaptured the Iberian peninsula from the Muslim Arabs who had held it since 710.

**Rūm** (Ar. *rūm*, lit. ‘Greeks’): the Greek-speaking inhabitants of North African towns at the time of the earliest (eighth-century) Muslim conquest, who were the descendants of former Byzantine soldiers and colonists.

**Rustumids:** an Ibāḍī (q.v.) dynasty (AD 778–909) of Persian origin which ruled from its base in Tāhart (now called Tiaret) in what is now western Algeria.

**Sahel** (Ar. *sāhil* ‘shore, edge’): the southern edge of the Sahara desert, which borders on (from west to east) Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, the north-eastern tip of Nigeria, Chad, and the Sudan.

**Šanhāja:** Berber tribe which founded the Almoravid (q.v.) dynasty and dominated the Maghreb and Ifrīqiyyā (q.v.) from the tenth century until the coming of the Banī Hilāl (q.v.).

**Shammar:** tribal bedouin confederation whose traditional homelands are in northern Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iraq.

**Shāwī** (Ar. *šāwī* pl *šāwiya* lit. ‘sheep-breeder / herder’): a general (and originally somewhat derogatory) term for bedouin who herd sheep rather than camels. The Shāwī tribes of the Fertile Crescent have a distinctive ‘bedouin’-type dialect.

**Shīʿa, Shīʿism, adj Shīʿī:** broadly speaking, a religious movement which upholds a privileged position for the Prophet’s family (*ahl al-bayt*) in the leadership of the Muslim Community. The term *šīʿa* derives from *šīʿat ʿAlī* ‘the party / partisans of ʿAlī’, i.e. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Prophet’s cousin and brother-in-law and the fourth Caliph, who was preceded and succeeded by Caliphs who were not from the Prophet’s family.

**Siirt:** town in south-eastern Anatolia, Turkey. An Arabic dialect of the Mesopotamian *qeltu*-type (q.v.) is spoken there.

**Sijilmassa** (or Sijilmāsa): ruined medieval Moroccan town on the River Ziz, **Tafilalt oasis** (q.v.), founded in AD 758. It is c.300 kilometres south-east of Fās on the edge of the northern Sahara and was on important trade routes.

**Sunna**, adj **Sunnī**: Ar. *sunna* means ‘accepted practice’ in a general sense, and came to be applied to the (exemplary) actions and customs of the Prophet and early pious Muslims. Eventually, the term came to mean ‘religious orthodoxy’, in contrast to the heterodoxy of **Shī‘ism** (q.v.).

**Šūfī** pl **Šūfiyya**: a person who seeks the attainment of an inner, mystical dimension of Islam (*taṣawwuf*). The word *šūf* means ‘sheep’s wool’ and *šūfī* is derived from it, probably referencing the rough garb worn by ascetics and mystics. The existence of Šūfiyya is attested from the eighth century.

**Tafilalt**: district of south-eastern Morocco in which ancient **Sijilmassa** (q.v.) was situated. It is a broad basin through which the River Ziz flows, forming an alluvial plain c.20 kilometres long x 16 kilometres wide, very fertile where irrigated.

**Taghlib**: important, mainly nomadic tribe of the Rabī‘ah group, which, before Islam, was based in Mesopotamia and north Arabia.

**Tamīm**: a very large bedouin tribe of pre-Islamic north-eastern Arabia.

**Tanūkh**: a pre-Islamic tribal confederacy first formed in **al-Bahrain** (q.v.), which then gradually moved north, ultimately reaching the Fertile Crescent.

**Ṭayyī’**: an ancient Arabian tribe which migrated in pre-Islamic times from the south of the peninsula to what is now the Jabal Shammar region of north-central Arabia.

**Tihāmah**: the coastal plain that extends the whole length of the west coast of Arabia, but in particular the southern two thirds of it, viz. the **Tihāmat ‘Asīr** (q.v.) and Tihāmat al-Yaman.

**Tikrit**: an Iraqi town on the Tigris River about 140 kilometres north of Baghdad and the same distance south of Mosul. It had a large Christian population before Islam and in the early Islamic period. Its original Arabic dialect is of the *qaltu*-type.

**Tilimsān** (modern Tlemcen): ancient town in western Algeria, which was at the junction of important east–west and north–south trade routes.

**Transoxania** / **Transoxiana**: the region of Central Asia which lies between the Amu Darya (Oxus) and Syr Darya (Jaxartes) rivers, roughly corresponding to modern Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, southern Kyrgyzstan, and south-western Kazakhstan. This vast territory, formerly known as Turkistan, was conquered and lightly colonized by the Arabs in the early eighth century but was never fully arabicized. A number of scattered Arabic *Sprachinseln* still survive there up to the present day, heavily influenced by the Turkic and Persian languages which surround them.

**Tuareg** (Ar. *ṭargī* pl *ṭwārəg* ‘man from Targa’ (= Berber name of Fezzān (q.v.))): Berber tribal people of the Sahara, living in what is now Algeria, Libya, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso.

**Turkoman**: a collective term for the ethnically Turkic tribes distributed over many parts of the Middle East (notably Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq) and Central Asia since medieval times.

**Umayyads** (Ar. *banū umayya*): (1) Islamic dynasty and Caliphate based in Syria, whose Caliphs ruled the Islamic World in the period AD 661–750; (2) Islamic dynasty based in Spain (AD 756–1031), offshoot of the Umayyads of Syria.

**Ūlād Brāhim** of Saïda: large bedouin tribe of southern Algeria.

**Upper Egypt** (= the Šaʿīd): the southern region of Egypt which begins at the Nile city of Asyūt. The region has a dialect distinctively different from those of Middle and Lower Egypt.

**Volubilis** (Ar. *walīlī*): originally Amazigh, then Roman, city in Morocco near Meknes, probably the ancient capital of Mauritania **Tingitana** (q.v.).

**Yazidis**: a mainly Kurdish-speaking group inhabiting areas of northern Iraq around Mosul whose identity is defined by their syncretistic religion, which contains elements of Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The name of the group derives from Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya, the second **Umayyad** (q.v.) Caliph.

**Zaër**: bedouin tribe of northern Morocco, whose tribal lands were near Rabat.

## 5. Personalia

**Al-Bakrī**, Abū ʿUbayd ʿAbd Allāh (1014–94): Andalusian historian and geographer.

**Al-Jawharī**, Abū Naṣr Ismāʿīl (?–c.1007): Arabic lexicographer, compiler of the tenth-century *al-ṣaḥāḥ* (or *al-ṣiḥāḥ*) (lit. ‘the True, the Authentic’), a milestone in Arabic lexicography.

**Al-Kindī**, Abū ʿUmar Muḥammad (897–961): Egyptian historian of the governors (*Wulāt*) of Egypt.

**Al-Maqrīzī**, Taqī al-Dīn Abū l-ʿAbbās (1364–1442): historian of Egypt.

**Al-Muqaddasī**, Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh (extant in the second half of the tenth century): geographer of the Islamic world, born in Jerusalem.

**Al-Qalqashandī**, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū l-ʿAbbās (1355–1418): chancery secretary to the Mameluke administration in Egypt, legal scholar, litterateur, genealogist, and historian of Egypt.

**Al-Shushtarī**, Abū l-Ḥasan (1212–69): Andalusian poet and mystic, who composed his *muwašṣaḥāt* (q.v.) and *azḡāl* (q.v. sub *zaḡāl*) in an artistic variety of dialectal Arabic.

**Al-Ṭabarī**, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr (839–923): celebrated universal historian, Qurʾān commentator and polymath, born in Central Asia, lived most of his life in Baghdad.

(ibn) **Al-Taghribirdī**, Abū l-Maḥāsin Jamāl al-Dīn (1409–70): historian of Egypt.

**Al-Wāqidī**, Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn Wāqid (747–822): historian of early Islam, born in Medina.

**Çelebi**, Evliya (real name Mehmed Zilli) (1611–c.1684): Turkish traveller who wrote the *seyāhatnâme* (‘Travelogue’), based on his journeys through the Ottoman Empire.

**Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam**, Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (798–871): earliest Egyptian-born historian of Egypt.

**Ibn Baṭṭūṭa**, Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh (1304–68): Moroccan traveller, born in Tangier, who travelled through the whole of the Islamic world and wrote his famous *Riḥla* (‘Journey’) based on his adventures.

**Ibn Ḥawqal**, Abū l-Qāsim ibn ʿAlī (extant in the second half of the tenth century): Arab geographer born in north Mesopotamia and a contemporary of **al-Muqaddasī** (q.v.).

**Ibn Iyās**, Abū l-Barakāt Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (1448–1524): historian of the late Mameluke dynasty and the early period (from 1517) of the Ottoman dynasty in Egypt.

**Ibn Khaldūn**, Walī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (1332–82): Tunisian philosopher of history and polymath, author of the *Muqaddima* ('Prolegomenon').

**Ibn Mandūr**, Muḥammad ibn Mukarram ibn ʿAlī (1233–1312): author of the celebrated Arabic dictionary *Lisān al-ʿArab* ('the Tongue of the Arabs').

**Ibn Quzmān** al-Qurṭubī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Aṣghar (1078–1160): Andalusian poet who composed in an artistic variety of dialectal Arabic.

**Maimonides**, Moses (known in Arabic as Ibn Maymūn) (1135–1204): Andalusian Sephardic Jewish philosopher, physician, theologian, and astronomer, born in Cordova, died in Egypt.

**Muḥammad ʿAlī** (1769–1849): Albanian-descended Ottoman army officer, self-declared Khedive ('viceroy') and founder of modern Egypt.

**Pedro de Alcalá** (c.1455–c.1508): author of *Arte para ligera mente saber la lengua arauiga y Vocabulista arauiga en letra castellana* (1505), in which the bulk of the Arabic material is Andalusian dialectal Arabic.

**Saʿādyā Gaon** (known in Arabic as Saʿīd bin Yūsuf al-Fayyūmī) (882/892–942): Egyptian rabbi, philosopher, translator, and Hebrew linguist.

**Ṣalāh ad-Dīn al-Ayyūbī** (known in Europe as 'Saladin') (1138–93): military commander and founder of the Ayyūbid (q.v.) dynasty, champion of the Muslim resistance to the Crusaders.

**Sībawaih**, Abū Bishr ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān (c.760–c.796): Persian-born founding father of Arabic grammatical science, whose single work *Kitāb Sībawaih* ('Sībawaih's Book') remains the basis of all indigenous treatments of Arabic grammar.

**ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ** (622–83): commander of the Muslim army which conquered North Africa, and the founder of Qayrawān, Tunisia.

# Bibliography

## Abbreviations

*Major reference works, journals, serials, etc*

B&W = Behnstedt and Woidich (various)

BSOAS = *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London*

CAD = Roth, Martha T. (ed.) (1956–2011). *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (26 vols). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

EALL = Versteegh, Kees et al. (eds) (2006–9). *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, Vols I–IV & Online Edition. Leiden: Brill.

EDNA = *Estudios de dialectología norteafricana y andalusí, Cadiz*

EHLL = Khan, Geoffrey et al. (eds) (2013) *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Vols I–IV & Online Edition. Leiden: Brill.

EI<sup>1</sup> = Houtsma, Martijn T. et al.(eds) (1913–38). *Enzyklopaedie des Islam*, 1st edn, Vols I–IV. Leiden/Leipzig: Brill.

EI<sup>2</sup> = Various (eds) (1960–2009). *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition*, Vols I–XII. Leiden: Brill.

JSAI = *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*

JSS = *Journal of Semitic Studies, Manchester*

T-S = Taylor-Schechter Geniza materials held in Cambridge University Library.

WAD = Behnstedt, Peter and Woidich, Manfred (2011–14). *Wortatlas der arabischen Dialekte*, Vols I–III. Leiden: Brill.

WZKM = *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*

ZAL = *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik*

ZDMG = *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

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*Futūḥ* = Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (1974). *Futūḥ Miṣr wa ʿAkhbārūhā*. Al-Qāhira: Muʾassasat Dār at-Taʿāwun li Ṭ-Ṭabʿ wa n-Nashr.

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*Sulūk* = Al-Maqrīzī (1970). *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*. Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (ed.). Al-Qāhira.

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